Thinking European(s)

Thinking European(s): New Geographies of Place, Cultures and Identities

Edited by

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In a very real sense, then, this book is a team effort which has proved, professionally and personally, deeply enriching for all of us.

Margaret Keane and Maria Villanueva
—Belfast and Barcelona, June 2009.

INTRODUCTION

THINKING EUROPEAN(S)

MARGARET KEANE AND MARIA VILLANUEVA

> When my grandmother was born in Warsaw, it was part of the Tsarist empire, Trieste belonged to the Habsburgs and Salonika to the Ottomans. The Germans ruled Poles, the English Ireland, France Algeria … Nowhere did adults of both sexes have the vote, and there were few countries where parliaments prevailed over kings. In short, modern democracy, like the nation-state it is so closely associated with, is basically a product of the protracted domestic and international experimentation which followed the collapse of the old European order in 1914 (Mazower, 1998: ix).

The geographies of place, culture, identity and citizenship are thorny issues in contemporary Europe. They have been undergoing profound changes in recent years, changes driven by the entanglement of a number of well-rehearsed factors: economic activities on a global scale; knowledge economies and technological developments; the nature of economic, financial and cultural exchanges; migration and mobility. What is certain is that the confusion of identities which underpin the search for a new European identity—built as it is on a complex multifaith, multicultural, plurilingual society—is accompanied by the ongoing process of European enlargement, integration and political transformation: in sum, Europe can no longer be presented as a space based on fixed physical elements and geopolitical divisions. Plurality is now the essence of a dynamic continent where local and global are blurred and where tensions simmer—tensions arising from contested and controversial pasts and presents and from the struggles among the different cultural and political identities which now share this over-heated space. It is these new geographies that are at the core of this book and which challenge university teachers to reveal the dynamism of the European cultural space.

In Europe, the idea of sovereignty which assigned power of governance to territorially-bounded states developed over the last two centuries. The importance of states in geopolitical thought continues to be significant,

despite their constant reshaping by successive wars and political events. The consolidation of nation-states and the redefining of political frontiers left cultural, linguistic and national minorities in their wake all over the continent; frequently, these minorities had only an historical space and a shared collective consciousness. Maps present the political structure. In the mental images of Europeans, political maps—where every country is coloured to highlight its entity and definition in relation to its neighbours—left a deep trace of their common space. Maps help modern states in the management of well-defined territories because they are 'true' and they repertoire those elements considered politically essential. Maps are forms of representation but "a map of a geography is no more that geography—or that space—than a painting of a pipe is a pipe" (Massey, 2005: 106).

Mismatches between the political map and the social and cultural realities of Europe can be explained by what is hidden by conventional political borders. An examination of European maps through time helps to clarify the changing nature of borders and confirms that concepts such as nationality, identity, ethnicity and citizenship inevitably arise when considering European places and peoples. We still live in a world of nation-states but, as European integration demonstrates, the political control of space is being continually re-negotiated in a process of re-territorialisation.

In recent decades, the increasing development of economic activities on a global scale has modified the relationships between local and international spaces with a growing number of interactions between places, countries and regions. These have, in turn, resulted in the fragmentation of state sovereignty (Harvey, 1989; Giddens, 1990; Nogué and Vicente, 2001). It is through globalisation that the dynamic of modernisation is most powerfully articulated, eroding territorial frontiers and boundaries and provoking confrontations of culture and identity. The impact of globalisation created a general assumption that it would de-emphasise nationalistic and regional tendencies while the building of supra-national states led many to believe that there would be a progressive dilution of national identities and a growing agglomeration of places and nations into larger state units (Hooson, 1994).

However, as world integration increases, so too do movements to identify with issues of territories and localities; cultural and linguistic minorities are claiming recognition of their territories and are emphasising the value of historical and everyday spaces. Identity matters because it raises fundamental questions about how individuals and groups fit into or are excluded from communities (Reisenleitner, 2001). As a consequence of the tension between the global and the local and between ethnic fragmentation

and homogenisation, these movements also represent the 'return to place' at a time when physical space seems to be losing its substance (Nogué and Vicente, 2001). State boundaries are often contested, since the boundaries of territory and the social identities of the inhabitants do not always coincide and this has an impact, not only on feelings of belonging, but also on the realities of citizenship.

Recent shifts towards more fluid and transitional relationships among places and regions, and increasing movement between communities, produce a permanent negotiation between and within spaces. Places may no longer offer clear, unique support for identity—for what gives a place its specificity is not only a long internalised history within its boundaries but also articulated moments in networks of social relations which integrate the global and the local in a positive way (Massey, 1994).

European space is experiencing a new cultural diversity which is adding even more complexity to wealthier and ageing European societies. In this context, Europe appears to be an increasingly heterogeneous space where the diversity of territories reflects the diversity of places and how they are used by different communities (Knox and Marston, 2004). This offers a clearer sense of a European identity based not just on geography but also on other agents such as globalisation, consumerism, communication technologies and the effects of mass media. Current migratory waves from the rest of the world, as well as intra-European mobility, underpin new multifaceted and layered identities, terms which support the idea of inclusion rather than exclusion.

The consolidation and widening of the integrated European space is also creating new challenges and, concurrently, mass migration is transforming the human landscapes of Europe's cities and villages. In the second half of the twentieth century, a continent accustomed to emigration for centuries became the arrival harbour for people from all continents. An understanding of the past is essential, although history demonstrates the difficulty of living with it in some places more than others. Geography then, as well as history, should be at the core of economic, political, social or cultural explanations.

The cultural, national and religious weave, the differences in lifestyles and cultural manifestations, the variety and multiplicity of languages, the fluidity of spaces and places are the common heritage but also the origins of many misunderstandings. Too often, diversity has been an excuse for confrontation rather than a starting point for dialogue—in the absence of which, Europe continues to be a panorama of conflict, hatred and pain.

Why do we need *Thinking European*(s)?

The emergence of these new geographies creates fresh challenges for university teachers of geography. There is a need to enhance students' knowledge of Europe's cultural landscape in light of the meshing of local and global processes and a need to encourage students to recognise and respect the strengths of the many cultures which make up that landscape. Thinking critically and holistically about these important contemporary issues is an activity which becomes even more pressing in times of economic challenge. It is not just part of an academic education, it is essential for the development of active and reflective citizens with socially active values who will be able to work productively within a complex cultural environment.

Prior to this project, our experiences and researches as a group of university teachers, based mostly in Europe, resulted in the authors agreeing on three observations with regard to the current state of the teaching of the geography of Europe.

First, that current programmes of study do not sufficiently foster an understanding of change in place, identities, cultures and citizenships and that, if these issues are explored at all, it is within older frameworks which favour economics rather than culture as the power which determines human relationships.

Second, that geography undergraduates across Europe show a limited awareness of regional, national and international perspectives on issues of cultural change.

Finally, that few students have been involved in dialogue or collaboration with other students from Europe or further afield, even though a few critically aware and engaged students are indeed already *thinking European(s)*.

What does *Thinking European*(s) offer?

Thinking European(s) has been written to address these observations in the context of cultural, societal and geographic change. It sets out to encourage university lecturers to bring alive the new geographies of cultures, identities and citizenships in Europe's lived places and spaces. University contexts differ, so the ideas and activities presented here have been developed in such a way that they can be used to elucidate concepts with or without the elements of international collaboration which are described later.

The primary objective of the book is to explore contemporary European society from a number of perspectives and in a range of place contexts so as to reveal the dynamism of its cultural space and demonstrate that large scale processes may be geographically uneven. Key issues relevant to these perspectives are unravelled through exemplars from at least three countries. Associated themes were chosen, taking into account the changing realities of Europe and the mismatch between current university programmes of study on the geography of Europe and the students' knowledge of, images of, and feelings about Europe.

Since plurality is most keenly felt in the realms of everyday life, social environments and social governance, *Thinking European(s)* reports on the research activities used to stimulate students' critical thinking and reflection on their preconceptions and geographical imaginations through the use of case studies.

This approach is based on the recognition and valuing of multiple geographical knowledges, the importance of continuing dialogue and transnational dialogue (Buttimer, 1986) and "the need to learn to negotiate to create this thing called society" (Massey, 1994).

Thinking European(s) is a collaborative work written by academics who cross cultures, religions, languages, genders, ideologies and political boundaries at regional, national, supranational and intercontinental scales. They work at universities in Austria, Bulgaria, Finland, Northern Ireland (UK), Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Ireland, Spain, Turkey, and the United States. This book grew out of their professional and personal encounters as members of the HERODOT Network, the European Network of Geography in Higher Education.

A map of *Thinking European(s)*

This book is divided into three parts. In Part I, following the editors' Introduction, Buttimer unravels concepts and contexts. She analyses the importance of the role of geography in facing the many challenges presented to educators that the growth of cultural diversity in Europe offers in terms of social integration. She points to the value—as powerful catalysts for dialogue among individuals from different cultural, national and language backgrounds—of sharing insights on lived experience in diverse milieux. Her experience of the Lund-based International Dialogue Project of the 1980s (Buttimer, 1986) informs some of these insights and also her examination of the potential role of geography in research and teaching on social integration and cultural integrity in Europe.

Part II, *Understanding and Imagining Europe*, questions whether or not students are *thinking European(s)* and it examines the diverse ways in which the geographies of Europe are represented to them in their university curricula. It is the result of dialogue between geographers from a range of backgrounds across Europe and beyond.

Chapter Two, *Images of Europe*: *the* S*tudent Imagination*, explores the images and attitudes which students have about Europe, Europeanness, European identity, other countries and peoples and it uncovers students' cultural openness. Case studies have been provided by the contributors from Bulgaria, Northern Ireland, Poland and Turkey.

Just as student knowledge, images and attitudes vary, so too do university curricula. Chapter Three examines syllabuses from universities in six European countries and concludes that, in the majority of cases, an economic interpretation is favoured while a cultural lens is missing. Case studies from Austria, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Ireland, Spain and Turkey are included.

Part III, the major part of the book, *Building Geographies of Europe through Local Knowledge*, engages with five broad themes at a 'place' level that is recognisable to students. Each chapter follows a similar model and offers: a conceptual framework which introduces concepts and theoretical debates; a student activity designed to test these concepts and to develop a range of skills that will heighten critical thinking and geographical imaginations through dialogue and negotiation; case studies which draw on the implementation of that activity and which provide the basis for evaluating the contribution of the activity to embedding the concepts and enhancing students' critical understanding of contemporary geographies of culture, place, identities and citizenship in Europe.

In Chapter Four, the first theme, *Place and Identity in a Globalising Europe*, uses participant observation and interviews to examine the inter-weaving of local and global processes in the public spaces of everyday life in Barcelona, Lisbon and Belfast.

In Chapter Five, *Transnational Lives*: *Migrant Narratives of* '*Home' and* '*Belonging'*, the biographical approach taken by students in trying to understand the concepts and realities of contemporary migration provides the material for case studies from Bulgaria, Northern Ireland, Poland and Turkey that demonstrate the complexity of migrant 'belonging' today.

In Chapter Six, *Contested Spaces of Memory and Identity*: *Lingering Impacts*, we deal with how specific parts of Europe arrived at the twenty-first century and shows how many of the issues that Europe faces today had their foundations in earlier eras. It presents case studies based on fieldwork carried out in Austria and the Republic of Ireland.

Chapter Seven, *Re-imagining National Identity in a Changing Europe*, considers the elusive concept of national identity through research, dialogue, negotiation and reflection. As members of multi-national classrooms and, through an internet project with other universities in Europe, students evaluated both the theoretical debate and their understandings of their own positions. The internet project reflected the global dimension as they were also joined by students from the United States.

The final Chapter, *Citizenship*: *Making Space for 'Self' and 'Other'*, returns to students' knowledge and attitudes to people and places and to critical reflection on 'self' and 'other' in order to address issues of stereotyping and 'othering'. It explores three sides of the triangle—Finland, Spain and Turkey—and emphasises the necessity for students to become *thinking European(s)*.

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PART I

CONCEPTS AND CONTEXTS

CHAPTER ONE

GEOGRAPHY, DIALOGUE AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

ANNE BUTTIMER

"How could people be so stupid as to start a world war?" A gripping puzzle indeed for a twelve-year old Swedish boy, returning home in 1914 from holidays in Germany and England on a blacked-out ship crossing the North Sea. His tentative answer was: "They simply do not understand one another's history and geography." William William-Olsson went on to pursue a brilliant career in geography (William-Olsson, 1983: 156).

It was in the wake of wartime atrocities that European peoples finally embarked on a bold adventure toward 'integration'. For fifty years, from 1958 to 2008, the journey has involved both top-down idealistic visions of harmonised national procedures and bottom-up fits and starts, advances and retreats. While initially welcoming freedom of movement and interaction, some participants recoiled at the threat of homogenisation and generalised planning standards. The process, however, has engendered a keener sense of shared histories, common cultural heritage and prospects for Europe's role within a global society. And, as younger generations have now learned via programmes such as Erasmus and Socrates, there is much more to discover in each others' histories and geographies.

How could geography serve to elucidate the challenges involved in the integration of Europe's various cultures? Geography retains its status in the curricula of schools and colleges but, by the same token, its textbooks tend to view the world through the lenses of particular nation-states; often, too, there has been an inertia in the upgrading of teaching materials. What is needed now are methods and ideas which could foster the ability to *think European*. This introductory chapter suggests ways in which dialogue and the sharing of insights from lived geographical experience could aid in the process. Specific methods and interpretative themes, based on an international dialogue project initiated in Sweden, are described and their relevance to the current European challenge outlined.

Integration: knowledge and lived experience

It was to questions of knowledge integration, and particularly to the challenge of building bridges between human and biophysical sciences, that an International Dialogue Project was launched in Sweden during the ten-year period 1978–1988.[1] Geography, a discipline whose domains of enquiry overlap those of natural science, humanities, and social science, yet one which persistently sought an integrated perspective on reality, was one of the central foci of attention.

The term 'integration' itself can evoke ambivalent emotional responses. Whatever the positive connotations the word may hold in art and architecture, mathematics and engineering, in this particular context it could imply a kind of managerial or 'top-down' solution to the issue of research specialisation. Functional specialisation had, after all, become an almost irreversible trend in science, one with potentially invaluable merits. Rather than force structural collaborations then, why not instead invite each specialist to reflect critically on connections between knowledge and experience within his or her own field of expertise, and then engage in dialogue with other specialists on precisely these connections? Such a process, it was hoped, could eventually yield insight into bases for mutual understanding and the eventual integration of research results on substantive questions (Buttimer and Hägerstrand, 1980).

Adventures in dialogue

The core of our experiment was a series of video-recorded interviews with senior and retired professionals in various fields. Stories were told of career experiences, the dream and reality of major projects, the circumstances in which ideas were inspired, developed and tested. These video recordings were then shown to small groups of specialists in different fields as catalysts for discussion and reflection among people from different domains of expertise, and further queries raised with the interviewees. In courses on history and philosophy of science, students were assigned the in-depth study of particular scholars and their published works, while at the same time considering their own values and career

[1] The Project was supported by the Swedish Council for Humanities and Social Sciences, the Tercentenary Fund of the Bank of Sweden, and by subsequent grants from Clark University (Worcester, USA) and the University of Ottawa in Canada. Some of the fruits of this endeavour were published during the 1980s and particularly in *The Practice of Geography* (1983) and later in *Geography and the Human Spirit* (1993).

horizons. "If William-Olsson could dare to do that in the 1930s", a Swedish graduate student remarked, "why can't I try in the 1980s?" The process became a valuable vehicle for inter-generational as well as inter-cultural dialogue and mutual understanding (Buttimer 1983, 1986).

Between 1978 and 1988, over 120 individuals from a wide variety of fields generously shared their career stories either in written or video-recorded form. Further in-depth analyses of those involving geographers was undertaken and an ambitious scale of dialogue among readers and authors was initiated. Already in the early 1980s, through careful scrutiny of autobiographical accounts and published works, a trilogy of interpretative themes, *meaning–metaphor–milieu*, was emerging as potential framework for discerning common denominators of interest among practitioners of diverse specialties (Buttimer, 1983). *Meaning* refers to vocational skills, talents and work preferences; *metaphor* points toward cognitive style or basic world-view underlying research models and paradigms; and *milieu* embraces not only those environmental circumstances deemed relevant in the formation of a person's orientations to meaning and metaphor, but also those enduring constellations of public interest that geography has sought to elucidate, explicitly or implicitly, through disciplinary thought and practice. The three intertwining themes enabled readers to appreciate the uniqueness of each individual's career journey and, at the same time, to discover general processes involved in the relationships between scholarly practice and its societal context.

The trilogy of *meaning–metaphor–milieu* served usefully not only as a framework for courses on the history of science, it also provided fresh perspectives on empirical and practical questions. It was particularly helpful in elucidating the challenge of human mobility and identity; in this context, it was a matter of transposing the issue of 'integration' to one of potential dialogue and mutual understanding between hosts and guests in migrant situations (Buttimer, 1985).

Finding meaning in one's migrant situation may depend, to a great extent, on one's work or professional setting. Access to employment means not only the opportunity for interaction with colleagues in work settings, but also the ability to contribute competently to one's host environment, rather than being simply the recipient of welfare payments. Equally important is the milieu itself: a migrant is more likely to feel at home in new surroundings if it becomes possible to develop a sense of place that is resonant with former experience (Norberg-Schultz, 1980; Moberg, 1949; Relph, 1984; Buttimer, 1980). More significant than the biophysical and architectural aspects, however, are the social characteristics of the host milieu: how open this may be for continuity and distinctiveness

in the migrant's social space. But reflections on meaning and milieu could easily lead to a dramatisation of contrasts between host and guest perceptions: each could reflect on their respective status quo or states-of-being, tied to jobs and places, without yielding mutual understanding. To transpose the discourse on identity from states-of-being to states-of-becoming demands dialogue, story-telling and an appreciation of metaphor.

The essential function of metaphor is to evoke fresh insight into hitherto unexplained matters. Metaphor—*meta* meaning 'change' or 'over'; *pherein* meaning 'to carry' or 'to bear'—can facilitate understanding of the unfamiliar by way of analogy to the familiar. Story-tellers in any culture recognise the power of metaphor. The researcher's world also uses metaphors (such as map, system, boundary, mechanism, integration) in their taken-for-granted transactions with other academics and policy-makers. Whether these have the same connotation for immigrant communities may be questionable. Hence the challenge of discerning potential common denominators or, to use the language of Alfred Schütz, to find a "zone of common reach" (Schütz, 1944; Schütz and Luckman, 1973). The same dilemma was already apparent in the Lund Dialogue Project: each participant could reach his or her own integrated account of *meaning–metaphor–milieu*, but it was not at all clear how these 'integrated accounts' could be negotiated.

States of *being* and *becoming*

Further scrutiny of the career accounts and continued dialogue with authors and students led to some reconsideration of the original interpretative framework. As a conceptual scheme, there was little doubt about its heuristic value. What it afforded was a cross-sectional (synchronic) interpretation of texts in context. But what of the diachronic? Surely one of the main values of studying life histories was the opportunity they afforded to catch a glimpse of the flow of events, changes of career courses over time. What was illuminating for authors was the discovery of resonances between their journeys and those of others, similarities and differences in their attitudes toward external events that occurred during their working careers. The metaphors discernable in several career accounts were those of 'journey' rather than 'destination', of groping toward solutions rather than ready-made answers: images of rivers, trees, wanderings in the woods recurred in several accounts.

The social and academic milieux in which these authors had pursued their careers had witnessed many radical changes—from the optimism of pre-First World War days through the Depression years to another war,

and then to the great excitement over post-war reconstruction and regional development. How might one characterise the changing intellectual milieux surrounding those career journeys? How might one relate these diverse individual journeys to the diachronic flow of external events and trends?

While working on the history of humanism and geography, a fresh trilogy of themes emerged, a mytho-poetic-metaphorical mode of interpreting knowledge and life experience and a wider synthetic frame within which all the previous stories could be elucidated. In historical perspective, it seemed, the essential message of humanism could be regarded as an emancipatory cry—in dialectical (and potentially creative) tension with the rational quest for knowledge integration. Within the overall drama of earth dwelling, humanism might be best defined as the cri de cœur of humanity, voiced wherever its integrity was threatened or its horizons dimmed (Buttimer, 1993).

Throughout the European record of intellectual history, one could identify moments of breakthrough—partial integrations of knowledge and understanding—that shone forth as diamonds in the ashes of former certainties. New discoveries in various realms of knowledge and life could be regarded as *Phoenix* moments—for example, the birth of a nation, the stirrings of revolution, new levels of awareness in art, music, literature or scientific explanation. Once structured and institutionalised—for example, integrated as a model paradigm—*Faust* entered the drama: ideas and practices became normalised, justified and sometimes defended as the only orthodox way of doing things. And eventually, as in our own day, the reflective *Narcissus* could generate two kinds of response: wallowing in the love-hate relationship to one's Faustian folkways, or the courage to cast these aside and open horizons for new ways to emerge. Back and forth through informal and formal encounters during decades in Sweden, from the broad sweep of Western history to the individual life story, there was a resonance of the fundamental drama of *Phoenix–Faust–Narcissus*. The relevance to questions of European integration and cultural integrity should also be obvious.

Might this thematic trilogy of *Phoenix–Faust–Narcissus* afford useful narrative frames for story-telling among hosts and guests in European settings today? It could enable a collective confrontation of the current realities and careful reflection on historical experiences of European cultures. And it is in this context that the discipline of geography has much guidance to offer.

Geography, social integration and cultural diversity

Four specific themes, each with specific urgency in European settings, serve to illustrate this claim: (1) human identity and milieu, (2) cultural diversity in European cities, (3) European diversity in historical perspective and (4) paradoxes of policy and planning.

Human identity and *milieu*

To seek a distinct cultural identity may well be a universal human trait and, indeed, it is to human cultural diversity that one owes those rich panoramas of landscapes across the continent. The challenge of living with this diversity today is not only diplomatic and political in nature, it has profoundly geographical underpinnings as well (Yaeger, 1996). The cartographic mosaic of human identities often displayed in atlases of Europe does not, alas, reflect peaceful co-existence: the record of wars, campaigns and conquests reveals another tale. Down the centuries and, especially since the early 1950s, there have been efforts to transcend these spatially circumscribed cultural worlds via networks of transport and trade to facilitate the circulation of commodities, people and ideas. Even today globalisation processes bear promises of new horizons for communication and, at the same time, the threat of cultural homogenisation, yielding once again the countervailing trends of freer access to continental and global networks on the one hand and the re-assertions of place-based distinctiveness on the other. Europe's cultural worlds may be seen as a mosaic of spatially circumscribed habitat domains, but they are also linked to the footloose mechanisms of trans-boundary networks and flows (Buttimer, 1972, 2004; Castells, 1989; Lefebvre, 1991; Harvey, 1993).

Issues of cultural identity, of continental diversity and unity have prompted considerable discussion among scholars and media in recent years. They have also attracted the attention of many European bodies such as the Council of Europe, the European Science Foundation and especially the Academia Europaea (Blockmans and Genet, 1993; Le Goff, 2003). Recognising, too, that most treatises on Europe have traditionally been framed in national terms, scholars today seek to identify transnational sources of Europe's cultural diversity. These are usually ascribed to influences of language, religion, state-formation, market systems and elite social networks, spheres within each of which the tensions of integrative and dispersive forces could be observed (Blockmans, 1997).

Geographers and anthropologists have tended to focus on the importance of place and territory, as well as tensions between 'home' and

'reach' for European communities. Profound transformations of economic structures have led to an 'unmooring', a 'disembedding' of identities (Sassen, 1996). Traditional modes of territorial or place-based identity, especially when these are conflated with race, gender, religious or class differentiation, have actually served as bases for both progressive political mobilisation and reactionary exclusionary politics (Harvey, 1993). "The space of flows dominates the historically constructed space of places," Castells claimed, "as the dominant organisation detaches itself from the social constraints of cultural identities and local societies" (Castells, 1989). How do these metaphors resonate in the everyday life experiences of immigrants today?

Cultural diversity in European cities

It is surely in urban contexts that these processes may be most easily observed. Cities, after all, could be regarded as 'time-space concentrations of society'. Europe is one of the most urbanised continents on earth, with 75 per cent of its population already living in urban areas. Issues of cultural diversity have become even more urgent, as traditional notions of assimilation, multiculturalism, melting pot, and others, seem quite inadequate in the explication of recent urban realities. Migration to cities has always held out emancipatory prospects for individuals and groups eager to escape from the constraining bonds of territory, ethnicity, religion or class. In these new environments, it was often hoped, individuals could free themselves from inherited social restrictions; social groups themselves could engage in wider networks, evolving new identities without sacrificing their cultural integrity (Schorske, 1981; Sassen, 1996). Central tensions between place and space, between bounded domains and footloose spatial networks, assume fresh urgency in West European cities as they witness unprecedented levels of in-migration from East and South since the demise of the USSR and the expansion of the European Union. Growing social inequities and policies conducive to ghettoisation have given rise to fundamentalism among both host and immigrant urban communities.

Riots by disaffected immigrant youths in Parisian suburbs, train bombings in Madrid and London, political assassinations in the Netherlands, and stepped-up airport security throughout the continent, are among the dramatic changes witnessed in recent years. In Britain, after the 7/7 bombings in July 2005, numerous individuals were arrested on charges of terrorist offences as New Labour began to realise that its policies of multiculturalism may have actually encouraged some Muslim communities

to regard themselves as separate and hostile states-within-a-state. A series of cartoons of the prophet Mohammed, published in a Danish newspaper in September of the same year, prompted violent threats from Islamic sources, and dramatic policy changes followed in previously liberal governments. In the Netherlands, where immigrant groups were encouraged to retain their language, religion and culture, there arose a populist revolt against the "Islamisation of the Netherlands".[2]

Beyond issues of cultural identity, language and ethnic affiliations, critical questions remain concerning quality of life and urban social space (Lefebvre, 1991). The root causes of protest are often related to economic welfare and to employment opportunities and access to urban facilities. In terms of everyday activity networks, one could question what opportunities there are for face-to-face encounter among people of different backgrounds. Traditional foci of social interaction—schools, shops, clubs, stadia and social services—have tended, when subjected to the laws of the market, to become more widely spaced, remote and eventually segregated. Reflections on European experiences in these various spheres might, in fact, shed light on dilemmas facing urban communities and national governments today regarding the negotiation of diversity and identity within the everyday lifeworlds and the actual social spaces of contemporary cities. Ironically, with increased mobility and the promotion of tourism, there has been a net deterioration in the quality of urban life—not to be confused with standards of living—as many groups feel alienated from their local environments because of the commodification of place and regeneration processes which rewrite the built and social fabric of the city.

European cultural diversity in historical perspective

Europe remains a multilingual, multiethnic continent. Down the centuries, the Latin language enabled scholars, merchants and aristocrats to communicate internationally. But eighteenth and nineteenth century nation-building recognised the power of a common vernacular language and this eventually became one of the main foundations of national identity (Dominian, 1917). Within the everyday lifeworlds of Europeans

[2] Following the murder of Theo van Gogh for the crime of making a film critical of Islamic oppression of women, strict laws were enacted which aimed at curbing immigration and promoting the integration of the 1.7 million first-generation and second-generation non-western immigrants living in its cities. The recent shift to the right in European politics is illustrated in the banning of the burka and face veil in public places, new laws on citizenship tests, and forced repatriations.

today, how much is known about vernaculars other than that of the host society? While immigrants from former colonial empires (Iberian, Dutch, French or English) would likely speak the same language as their hosts, there are many other immigrant communities who do not. In fact, in some instances, Arabic and Chinese communities have come from much broader transnational linguistic communities than those of the host. Given the efficacy of television and of digitally-based information networks, such transnational reference worlds might even assume more salience for immigrants than those of the actual country in which they reside.

Focus on religious diversity also raises questions. Like most other cultural developments in Europe, the most powerful influences came from the southeast—from Mesopotamia, Egypt, Rome and Greece. The Arab world, spanning the wide domain from central Asia through north Africa and Iberia, deserves increased attention today. Recent texts raise questions about stereotypical images of Christian, Muslim and Jew. Up until the twelfth century there was much interaction among these three groups. In the early years of Islam in Syria, the translation of ancient scholarly works from Greek to Arabic, which led to such dramatic developments in 'Arabic' science and medicine, was frequently done by Christians (Djebbar, 2001). The Ottoman Empire was a multiethnic one and it pursued a tolerant Islamic regime (Cardini, 2000). In the Studia Generalia of medieval Spain, Christian, Jewish and Arab scholars translated and copied classical Greek texts (Buttimer, 1989). It was surely in post-Reformation (and Counter-Reformation) times that religious affiliation became a seriously divisive force as some national regimes strove to impose religious homogeneity on their populations.

Historical geography can also shed light on imperial foundations of cultural identity. Vast Asian and east European empires once reigned for centuries over widely dispersed and culturally diverse populations because of the hierarchical organisation of their military, administrative and economic power. West European empires were not equally effective in imposing hegemonic identities of language, religion or ethnicity over large-scale populations. Neither the grandiose visions of Charlemagne in the ninth century, nor the expansionary aims of Charles V to conquer vast tracts of Europe and New Spain (and to impose Catholicism on all) in the sixteenth century survived. In western Europe urban populations created their own spheres of influence producing integration from bottom-up (Blockmans, 1997), and thus could be regarded as a powerful anti-hegemonic influence in the fostering of cultural diversity.[3] In contrast with

[3] The internal morphology of towns and cities affords tangible evidence on the predominant ethos of their foundation: Roman, Medieval, Baroque and Industrial all

the autocratically designed urban landscapes of China and Japan, European cityscapes commonly reflect bottom-up initiatives and culturally distinctive domains of dwelling. From the eleventh century, merchants, bankers and entrepreneurs in western cities sought independence from the overlords, bishops, princes and emperors. Burghers organised trade and systems for the protection of individual property and the defence of citizen rights (Moore, 1966).

Key questions of place, space and human identity have to do with matters of scale, and again there are lessons from history. During the first millennium of European history, only Constantinople and Córdoba, the two great centres of the Arab Caliphate, had more than 100,000 inhabitants. In the year 1500, only five European cities—Venice, Genoa, Milan, Naples and Paris—reached this population size. The largest Italian cities were part of an urban network which included smaller towns linked by intensive market trading. Further north, settlements were smaller and more widely dispersed (de Vries, 1984). Prior to industrialisation, urbanisation spread along coastal sites and along navigable routes. But a critical change occurred in the sixteenth century with the stagnation of the Mediterranean region and the spectacular growth of the North Sea area: Antwerp, Amsterdam and London becoming cores of the capitalist world-system, an integrated market system on an intercontinental scale, functioning under the impulses of the human and material capital concentrated in the metropolis. Basic foodstuffs and raw materials became commercialised as a function of the needs of the world market, steered from Amsterdam in the seventeenth and London in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Wallerstein, 1980).

Freedom of the burghers paved the way for representative political participation and also for independent thinking. Secularisation, the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment were unique European developments, mostly implemented by private associations or companies. Cities created their own law systems, independent of those applicable to villages or noblemen, and commercial law was within their exclusive competence. Still, the diversity of powers in religious, legal, political and economic domains enabled greater freedom of action for individuals and organisations (Le Goff, 1997). Individualism, the protection of property rights, urban autonomy and the multiplicity of power structures were the conditions for the growth of commercial capitalism—a system that became

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have distinctive morphologies and all had characteristic structures of social interaction and overall management (Mumford, 1961).

hegemonic, eventually imposing itself globally and, therefore, no longer distinctively 'European' (Wallerstein, 1980).

Herein, therefore, lie several emerging questions. In the West European context, urban developments were closely associated with a quest for individual autonomy and revolt against hegemonic powers—*Phoenix*. It seems ironic, therefore, that market-based commercially-oriented policies now begin to exercise hegemony (even assuming the moral role of religion) in European Union circles—*Faust*. And the ecological and social consequences on human lifeways and identities, for host society as well as for immigrant populations, are coming home to roost. To analytically examine this newly taken-for-granted hegemony, with all its moral, emotional and material consequences, is a challenge for both hosts and guests today—*Narcissus*.

Sustainable development and *the logic of the market*

Now that European integration appears to be solidly underway, what other matters could all European peoples find as common challenges on shared 'horizons of attainable reach'? Among these surely are questions of how sustainable are the ways of life now taken-for-granted throughout the continent. What will the consequences be of currently promulgated development programmes? Given recent commitments, how are we to orchestrate the distinct and often competing imperatives of economic growth, social equality and ecological integrity? Recent trends in policy and practice seem scarcely conducive to such goals (Buttimer, 2001).

Urbanisation and urban sprawl, combined with an ever-increasing concentration of enterprise in larger conglomerates, globalisation of food production and distribution are all involved in emerging questions of sustainable development. These issues are already acknowledged by the EEA (European Environment Agency, 2006). Sprawling cities demand more energy, require more transport infrastructure and consume larger amounts of land, and increased gas emissions cause climate change, air and noise pollution. EU Cohesion and Structural Funds were "major causes of sprawl across Europe" and EEA Executive Director Jacqueline McGlade declared:

> Indeed, throughout the continent one can observe that EU funding for road schemes has been a driving factor of urban sprawl in Europe, which consumed 800,000 hectares of farmland in the 1990s alone. Urbanisation now covers more than a quarter of the Union's overall territory. Over the past 20 years, built-up areas have increased by 20% while the population has increased by only 6%.