

The History and Development of the International Association for Intercultural Education (www.iaie.org)¹

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The origins and character of the International Association for Intercultural Education (IAIE) need to be placed within the context of developments in Europe after the Second World War. These key developments include:

1. Coming to terms with some 50 million dead on the European continent due to the Second World War, and especially the scars of Fascism and the Holocaust
2. The de-colonisation of countries in the Asian and African continents and the subsequent migration of millions from these former colonies to Western Europe
3. A series of refugee crises associated with war and conflict, e.g. the conflict on the Balkans in the 1990s.
4. The creation of a divided Europe into a Communist and Capitalist Block and a connected stream of migrants from the East to the West of Europe – and later on the dissolution of the Communist Block
5. Starting in the 1960's, the recruitment of millions of so called 'Guest workers' to countries such as Germany and the Netherlands to help fuel the growing need for labor in expanding economies.
6. Traditional emigration countries developing into immigration countries, such as Portugal and Greece.

All of these developments, each significant in its own right, created challenges for the education systems in especially Western Europe. The arrival of various newcomers came at a time when teachers and schools were monocultural in nature and unprepared for the diversity of cultural backgrounds, histories, religions etc associated with migrant students. University courses on prejudice and racism, for instance, were still rare well into the 1980s.

The IAIE was the outcome of growing dissatisfaction with the educational response to newcomers arriving in Western Europe. This response was characterized by compensatory educational programs that sought to assimilate migrants into European society. The prevailing model was a deficit model, defining migrants as problematic for society, needing to be 'enlightened' and 'civilized'. There was also a sense of dissatisfaction with educational theory and models that were borrowed directly from the United States and those that made no mention of power, status, racism and equity issues when describing the dynamics of intercultural contact.

Though mother tongue language instruction became commonplace in the 1960s and 1970's in countries such as Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, this was because the sense was that the many 'guest workers' would return to their countries of origin and that they thus needed support in their understanding of their heritage and language. In contrast, many teachers in schools viewed acquisition of the second language as the main problem for student, while first languages were perceived as a problem. No consideration was given to the connections between first and second language learning, or the teaching of second language and its role in enabling or disabling access to the school curriculum. One consequence of this was the designation of students as being in need of special education and systematically being consigned to special schools or vocational schools where academic expectations were low.

In 1979, Pieter Batelaan from the Netherlands – the first Secretary General of the IAIE - visited

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London to meet with professionals at the Community Relations Commission, the Inner London Education Authority and the International Centre for Intercultural Education at Institute of Education at the University of London. After his return to Utrecht, Pieter published a report on issues of 'intercultural education' in the Netherlands and 'multicultural education' in Britain. This document generated broad interest amongst teachers, teacher education institutions, national agencies and the Council of Europe. It subsequently formed the basis of a successful conference held in Nijenrode (the Netherlands) in 1982. A core group of people were entrusted to follow up this Conference with a further event which would address issues of intercultural education in practical terms and at the classroom level. It was decided that the second conference would take place in the UK and would focus on the issues of the curriculum in the broadest sense. The Council of Europe was involved from the very beginning in the work in intercultural studies and awarded bursaries to teachers and other participants to attend conferences and seminars. The purpose of the bursaries was to enable developmental work to take place. Various recommendations about the content, substance of the subjects as well as the pedagogies were raised during this gathering where the IAIE was formed.

The Second International Conference took place at the Institute of Education at the University of London in 1984. At this Conference, it became very apparent that the 'multicultural' initiatives in Britain and other English speaking countries were very different from those being undertaken by non-English speaking members of the Council of Europe. In an attempt to develop a more coherent, common and shared approach, the International Association for Intercultural Education was set up in London in 1983 as an European Organization and its thinking was informed by the pioneering work of anti-colonial organizations and the work at the international level by organizations like UNESCO. In many of the member states of the Council of Europe, the climate for initiatives to develop intercultural education were very favorable following the work undertaken on some of these issues in Project Number 7 of the Council of Europe.

Subsequently, the group that chose a new direction in teaching about 'the intercultural' included Pieter Batelaan (Netherlands), Steffan Lundgren (Sweden), Gerd Hoff (West Germany) Micheline Rey (Switzerland) and Jagdish Gundara from the (U.K.). The first Board consisted of Pieter as the Secretary General and Steffan and Jagdish as the Board members. The issue of educational inequality in socially diverse and multicultural societies and the absence of social justice in societies were of particular interest to the founder members. The first newsletters show how the founding members of the International Association were deeply concerned with the socio-economic consequences which were denying full social, economic and political rights to all groups and citizens who lived in Europe. The formation of the International Association of Intercultural Education was thus a direct result of understanding how overt and covert racism, xenophobia and marginalization through social class structures was leading to not only educational but political and economic injustices and that social and public policies were necessary to address these mounting social exclusions.

Issues in this field have had a comparative dimension from the beginning, because it involved colleagues working from different countries and fields with each other. The comparative aspect also led to discussions about the merits or otherwise of different approaches adopted by teacher educators or classroom or subject based teachers. Across the European context there were obviously a diverse range of views and practices.

Under the leadership of Pieter Batelaan in the early years, further conferences were held and a newsletter was published. The diverse background of IAIE members and the desire for inter-disciplinary and cross-curricular approaches shaped future conference themes. Of particular importance was the influential conference on arts education which was held in Bergen (the Netherlands) in 1993, which brought together a broad range of participants involved in teaching: languages, literature, drama, media studies, music, and visual arts. There were wide ranging discussions about the work within discrete subject areas as well as work in inter-disciplinary terms. For example, in the case of the media a drama documentary film called 'The March' made by the

International Broadcasting Trust (IBT) for the British Broadcasting Corporation, raised a range of issues about migration, the visual representation of migrations and immigrants and the ways in which these needed to be changed. Vice-Chairman of the IBT Jagdish Gundara and Robert Ferguson of the Media Education Department at the Institute of Education at the University of London produced guidelines for teaching about issues of development, migration and the diverse settled communities in different European countries.

The newsletter developed, in 1990, into an academic journal entitled *European Journal of Intercultural Studies*. The academic journal, aimed primarily at academics and policy makers, was published 2-3 times a year by Trentham Books with the support of the Council of Europe. Pieter Batelaan took upon himself to also become the Editor-in-Chief of the journal. Discussions between Pieter Batelaan and Elizabeth Cohen at Stanford University in the late 1980s led to an additional focus on cooperative learning strategies and especially Complex Instruction. The number of articles that were submitted to the journal increased significantly as it became better known and also the origins of articles broadened to include non-European countries. As the number of article submissions grew from especially the United States, Canada and Australia, the initial focus on European societies and especially the UK, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden (to name the most important) became dilute. As a consequence, the IAIE Board - consisting of 5 individuals elected by the membership - decided in 1996 to change both the title of the journal and the publisher. The journal dropped its European identity and became *Intercultural Education* to reflect the global nature of the journal and the issues it addressed. A contract was also signed with Carfax (Taylor and Francis) to become the publisher of the journal and thus expand the scope of the journal's readership.

Though not a core activity, the IAIE has generated multiple publications, including the Web-based educational tool *The Big Myth* (www.bigmyth.com), and the frequently requested booklet *The International Basis for Intercultural Education, Including anti-Racist and Human Rights Education*, written by Pieter Batelaan and Fons Coomans. But for the most part, key presentations at conferences, discussions of 'best practices' and critical discussions in the field are integrated into the journal *Intercultural Education*.

After a debilitating illness in 2004, that impaired Pieter Batelaan's ability to continue his work, Barry van Driel took over the reins of both the IAIE and the journal. Under his guidance, the journal went from appearing 3x a year to the present 6x a year. Conferences were held in Verona, Warsaw, Sarajevo, Turin, Athens and Xalapa. The first coordinated teacher training seminar will take place in Athens, Greece in April 2013. This will become an annual event, inviting teachers to meet with key persons in the field of Intercultural Education and receive training in critical issues. The IAIE Board, as well as the Editorial Board of the journal, was expanded to include members from North America and elsewhere. Barry's part-time employment at the Anne Frank House led to more attention being devoted to themes relating to human rights education and Holocaust education, and their connections to multicultural societies and intercultural education.

The expansion of IAIE activities led to the necessity to disconnect the role of Secretary General and Editor-in-Chief of the journal. Barry van Driel stepped down as Secretary General in January 2010, while remaining Editor-in-Chief of the journal. In order to create stronger links to Latin America and improve access to Spanish language educators and educational traditions, Gunther Dietz at the University of Veracruz in Mexico took over as Secretary General of the IAIE in January 2010.

In late 2012, Leslie Bash and David Coulby took over from Gunther Dietz. Barry and Driel and Michele Kahn became Vice President of the Association.