

3 / Education, cosmopolitan cultural capital and European elites in the nineteenth century

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INTRODUCTION

In studies of elite education there has been a disproportionate emphasis on the role of schools in the reproduction of *national* and regional elites. This predominates even in recent studies of contemporary elites and it has been noted by many scholars.¹ In contrast to that historiographical trend, this essay will interrogate the longevity and endurance of transnational or global forms of schooling in the landscape of elite education at secondary or intermediate level – where social separation and hierarchy are at their most evident in the educational cycle. It will argue that in addition to the well-known bloc of nationally aimed educational institutions there has been a long tradition of alternative modes of education aimed at a European – and sometimes global – elite composed of a mixture of established nobility and emerging economic elite families. This education was never entirely separate from the national local contexts in which it was situated, of course, but its primary goal was not necessarily the reproduction or fortification of *national* elites. There are fewer of these elite schools, and their role in the hierarchy of elite education needs further contextualization, but this does not weaken the argument, which is that the type of school we associate with the super-elite class, such as the Swiss boarding schools Institut La Rosey or Beau Soleil, is a type of school with roots deeper in European history than is usually acknowledged. The broad thrust of the case made in the first section of this essay is that, at elite level, institutionalized education was one element of many that in the nineteenth

¹ See for example Rachel Brooks and Johanna Waters, 'The hidden internationalism of elite English schools', *Sociology*, 49:2 (2015), 212–28; Anne-Catherine Wagner, 'L'internationalisation de la formation des élites: vers une recomposition des classes dirigeantes?' in Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu (ed.), *La mobilité des élites: reconversions et circulation internationale: bilans et réflexions sur les possibilités de recherches comparatives nord-sud et est-ouest* (Ia i, 2011), pp 79–96. A recent special issue of the journal *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 12:2 (2014), 165–320 on 'Elite schools in globalising circumstances: new conceptual directions and connections' has offered a new approach from the dominant Bourdieuseian models – questioning 'how well they travel' in relation to a study of globalized education in Singapore and indeed critiquing their Eurocentrism and dependence on the language of class hierarchy.

century contributed to the accrual of a cosmopolitan cultural capital that helped to legitimate; reinforce and reproduce a mobile and transnational European elite in much the same way as sociologists speak of a generation of 'globals' or the 'stateless super-rich' in contemporary studies of elite mobilities.² Such institutions are often treated as functioning as training sites for national elites, at the expense of their transnational equivalents, which is a key feature of their educational product.

The second section will engage with the essentially religious character as well as the categorization of elite education in the centuries prior to the 'massification' of education in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Because the trend across much of western and northern Europe in the modern era has been the separation of church and state in education, the bulk of the work done on elite education in France, Germany, the Nordic lands and the United Kingdom has ignored the fact that, historically, elite production mirrored sharply drawn religious demarcations even when it traversed national or sovereign boundaries. Furthermore, much of the literature, mostly produced since the 1970s, is profoundly secular in tone and approach, and takes insufficient cognisance of the essentially religious character of education prior to the twentieth century. In Britain, this may well be because the dominant 'Clarendon schools' literature affords insufficient attention to elite Catholic providers serving a minority population. Similarly, in France, Germany and elsewhere on the Continent, the *Kulturkampf* is seen as a watershed after which religion was no longer as active or as viable a determining influence in elite education. Indeed, there is a sense in which the *Kulturkampf* is deemed to have completed a process that had begun with the downsizing of religious education in the late eighteenth century, culminating in the enforced departure of many Catholic institutions during the French Terror of 1793–4. This is not strictly true, and I will argue in the second section that religious demarcation continued to be an important consideration in many societies, and while this is most obvious in the case of Catholic schools, it is true also of other religions. I will further argue that transnational and trans-regional elite schooling was where that blurring of national boundaries was traditionally at its most evident, rather than in elite universities of Europe, in Vienna, Munich, Paris or elsewhere, in the eighteenth as well as the nineteenth centuries, as many of these elite schools accommodated a multiplicity of confessional identities. To this end, I will offer

² For 'globals' see Anthony Elliott and John Urry, *Mobile lives* (London, 2010). For the 'stateless super-rich' see Tanya Powley and Lucy Warwick-Ching, 'Stateless and super-rich', *Financial Times*, 28 Apr. 2012, cited in Mike Featherstone, 'Super-rich lifestyles' in Thomas Birtchnell and Javier Caletrio (eds), *Elite mobilities* (London, 2014), pp 99–135 at 115.



a general survey of the 'types' of transnational schooling strategies employed in Europe, before engaging with complicating issues, such as religion and gender, to any attempt to locate meaningful institutional examples. Finally, the essay will survey domestic forms of education, which is one of the truly under-researched aspects of globalized or transnational forms of elite education in the nineteenth century.

A PRE-HISTORY OF TRANSNATIONAL COSMOPOLITAN CAPITAL IN EDUCATION

Globalized universities and the transnational intellectual networks connected to them possess a literature of impressive depth.³ In contrast, the elite or cosmopolitan secondary school does not, and it is most often treated as if it is a creation of post-1920s 'internationalism' or post-1970s globalization.⁴ In point of fact, similar types of schools have existed for many centuries, and there are many examples of elite schools in the past offering a multi-national elite a cosmopolitan education. First, let us attempt to distinguish between 'international capital' and 'transnational capital' in education.

In the first body of literature – that on 'international' education – schools such as the International School of Geneva (1924), which was founded to serve the families of those engaged in the League of Nations, are archetypal.⁵ The development of this form of schooling is generally viewed through the prism of a more general shift to progressive and liberalized international cooperation in the post-First World War world alongside, among other initiatives, the

³ For example see Roger Chartier et al, *Les universités européennes du XVI^e au XVIII^e siècle*, 2 vols (Paris, 1986) and Christophe Charle et al., *Transnational intellectual networks: forms of academic knowledge and the search for cultural identities* (New York, 2004) for recent surveys. For a cogent example of one national elite on the move see Lucian Nastas, 'The education of Romanian university professors in western universities', *Historical Social Research*, 33:2 (2008), 221–31. ⁴ Some notable exceptions include Robert Sylvester, 'Mapping international education: a historical survey 1893–1944', *Journal of Research in International Education*, 1:1 (2002), 90–125, who argues that Spring Grove School in Hounslow, London (1867–89) offers an antecedent of a school aiming primarily for international cooperation. Similarly, Marcelo Caruso argues that the idea of internationalized schooling had a much longer pre-history, see 'Within, between, above, and beyond: (pre)positions for a history of the internationalisation of educational practices and knowledge', *Paedagogica Historica*, 50:1–2 (2014), 10–26. ⁵ Ian Hill argued that the International School of Geneva was the first such initiative in a series of influential articles: Ian Hill, 'Early stirrings: the beginnings of the international education movement', *International Schools Journal*, 20:2 (2001), 1–22; idem, 'The history of international education: an International Baccalaureate perspective' in M.C. Hayden, J.J. Thompson and G. Walker (eds), *International education in practice* (London, 2002), pp 18–29. For the most recent survey see Leonora Dugonji, '"A miniature League of Nations": inquiry into the social origins of the International School, 1924–1930', *Paedagogica Historica*, 50:1–2 (2014), 138–50.

creation of the League of Nations, the Red Cross, the International Bureau of Education and several prominent NGOs.⁶

To date, the post-Cold War 'globalization' literature on the elite cosmopolitan secondary school has focused on the International Baccalaureate in education, which has been the subject of myriad treatments.⁷ Here the emphasis is on the global citizenship ideals of the International Baccalaureate Organization (1968–) and its antecedents – the Conference of Principals of International Schools (1949), and the European Council for International Schools (1965).⁸ This is seen, to some extent, as a natural outgrowth of the international education movement – but it can equally justifiably be presented as a new iteration in a long cycle of cosmopolitan education in Europe. In both of these literatures confusion is general as to what precisely is meant by 'international education'. It can variously refer to 'a whole range of educational activities oriented to learning *about* other nations, learning *from* other nations and learning *with* individuals or groups from other nations'.⁹ It may equally refer to the creation of a sense of worldliness, global citizenship or international-mindedness, all three of which are contested terms. Here, I follow Weenink and others in utilizing the related concept of *cosmopolitanism* as a form of embodied cultural capital in relation to European elite education in the nineteenth century, while acknowledging the clear overlap with literatures relating to 'international' education.¹⁰ Writing of the present, Igarashi and Saito argue that:

education systems operate as central institutional mechanisms that legitimate cosmopolitanism as a desirable attribute of the person living in a global world, while distributing this universally desirable attribute unequally within a population.¹¹

6 For more on 1920s internationalism see Daniel Gorman, *The emergence of international society in the 1920s* (Cambridge, 2012), pp 1–20; Akira Iriye, *Global community: the role of international organizations in the making of the contemporary world* (Oakland, CA, 2002). 7 For a recent survey see Julia Resnik, 'The denationalization of education and the expansion of the International Baccalaureate', *Comparative Education Review*, 56:2 (2012), 248–69. 8 See Ian Hill, 'International education as developed by the International Baccalaureate Organization' in Mary Hayden, Jack Levy and Jeff Thompson (eds), *The SAGE handbook of research in international education* (London, 2007), pp 25–37. 9 See Paul Tarc, 'What is the "International" of the International Baccalaureate? Towards a periodization of IB in the world' (PhD, York University, Toronto, 2007), p. 3. 10 Don Weenink, 'Cosmopolitanism as a form of capital: parents preparing their children for a globalizing world', *Sociology*, 42:6 (2008), 1089–1106. For a recent overview of a similar dynamic at a very different socio-economic level, see Mary Beth Chrostowsky and D.E. Long, 'Transnational educational capital and emergent livelihoods: cultural strategies among repatriated South Sudanese' in Lesley Bartlett and Aameena Ghaffar-Kuche (eds), *Refugees, immigrants, and education in the global south: lives in motion* (London, 2013), pp 85–98. 11 Hiroki Igarashi and Hiro Saito, 'Cosmopolitanism as cultural capital: exploring the intersection of globalization, education and stratification', *Cultural*

secondary education were, from this point, defined by their curriculum: essentially a classical liberal humanist programme of learning available to very few, it was based on the study of Greek and Roman classic texts.¹⁶ Classical knowledge served as an elite signifier that doubled as a barrier to social mobility for those further down the social ladder by preventing access to credentials, qualifications and higher degrees in high-status occupations such as medicine and law. In practice this meant that access to institutions that could provide such an education was restricted to the very few who could afford it, and this was as true in the sixteenth century as it was in the nineteenth. To prove this point: take for example the transnational pattern of education of Catholic elite families of England, Ireland and Scotland. From the 1590s onwards the sons (and later daughters) of these families were to be found in Catholic boarding schools, convents and across northern France and the Spanish Netherlands, as well as in central Europe.¹⁷ In the eighteenth century the intensification of anti-Catholic policies meant that this movement was enforced and reinforced. A network of seminaries co-existed with this form of elite schooling, both serving different but complementary purposes, but serving an international client base and delivering a high-class educational product.

There are examples of schools with a Continental (and sometimes global) reputation in Europe in the seventeenth century, whose symbolic and cultural capital was later monopolized, even colonized, by nationalizing impulses. Take for example, the Jesuit college at La Flèche, which is associated most often with René Descartes – one of its earliest pupils. The college operated as a European brand from its opening in 1604 to its enforced closure in 1762. David Hume wrote his *Treatise* while in dialogue with the globally networked scholastic community of La Flèche which welcomed American, Indian, Chinese and 'Tartar' students and professors.¹⁸ Its 'nationalization' was pursued in the late eighteenth century as part of a broader movement that secularized most Continental colleges between 1760 and 1790. This was symptomatic of a general

¹⁶ The best work on this, in the English language, is probably Christopher Stray, *Classics transformed: schools, universities, and society in England, 1830–1960* (Oxford, 1998). A long discussion of the importance of the classics features in Patrick Joyce, *The state of freedom: a social history of the British state since 1800* (Cambridge, 2013), pp 229–62. ¹⁷ For early explorations see David Worthington (ed.), *British and Irish emigrants and exiles in Europe: 1603–1688* (Leiden, 2010); Ronnie Po-chia Hsia, *The world of Catholic renewal, 1540–1770* (Cambridge, 2005). For the eighteenth century see Maurice Whitehead, *English Jesuit education: expulsion, suppression, survival and restoration, 1762–1803* (Aldershot, 2013); Tom McNally, *The sixth Scottish university: the Scots colleges abroad: 1575 to 1799* (Leiden, 2012). For a more general picture see Christopher Brooks, 'Apprenticeship, social mobility and the middling sort, 1550–1800' in Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks (eds), *The middling sort of people: culture, society and politics in England, 1550–1800* (Basingstoke, 1994), pp 78–81. ¹⁸ Jacques Marx, 'Formes et figures du goût chinois dans les anciens Pays-Bas', *Études sur le XVIIIe siècle*, 37 (2009), 57–74.

animosity toward free-market Catholic providers, but particularly the Jesuits, in the wake of claims of corruption in colonial South America and the French colonies.¹⁹ This secularizing and nationalizing phase has been presumed by historians to have been more complete than it was in reality, with many survey works from the French Terror onwards prioritizing the national focus of elite schooling over the enduring commitment to transnational education.

The work of Lenore O'Boyle, D.G. Scanlon, Patrick Harrigan and others has shown that the training of national elites was a concern across many European societies in the nineteenth century, in what Scanlon called the era of 'mass education for patriotism'.²⁰ By the 1830s and 1840s the major European polities were beginning to seek ways to separate and expand publicly funded schools from the classical models that preceded them. The resultant remodelling of education to cater for an expanding bourgeoisie led to a revolution in middle-class and accessible bourgeois education, but not necessarily at elite levels of society.²¹ The growth of the city was an important force in all this, especially in separating out the classes, with the 'white-collar' professional classes gradually expanding from less than 3 per cent, which was the situation in most advanced European societies in the late eighteenth century, towards the modern 10 per cent.²² The classical boarding school education was not left untouched, of course, but elements of its product were reshaped by competition from below, even while newer, more bourgeois institutions imitated its elite signifiers. This sometimes took on comic proportion in English schools, where house systems, fagging and the wearing of gowns became de rigueur in even quite modest establishments.²³

The transnational elite school in the nineteenth century took several different forms. The most obvious providers of a de-nationalized education were trans-national religious orders that aimed at the training of Catholic nobles and the nouveau riche. Here, we see orders such as the Jesuits and the Benedictines,

19 Charles R. Bailey, 'French secondary education, 1763–1790: the secularization of ex-Jesuit Collèges', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 68:6 (1978), 1–124; D.G. Thompson, 'The Lavalette affair and the Jesuit superiors', *French History*, 10:2 (1996), 206–39. 20 D.G. Scanlon (ed.), *International education: a documentary history* (New York, 1960), pp 3–4. For more on the massification of intermediate or secondary education see Fritz K. Ringer, 'The education of elites in modern Europe', *History of Education Quarterly*, 18:2 (1978), 159–72; Lenore O'Boyle, 'The problem of an excess of educated men in western Europe, 1800–1850', *The Journal of Modern History*, 42:4 (1970), 471–95. 21 R.D. Anderson, 'The idea of the secondary school in nineteenth-century Europe', *Paedagogica Historica*, 40:1–2 (2004), 93–106. 22 Marcus Ackroyd et al., *Advancing with the army: medicine, the professions, and social mobility in the British Isles, 1790–1850* (Oxford, 2006), p. 10. 23 See J.R. de S. Honey, *Tom Brown's universe: the development of the English public school in the nineteenth century* (New York, 1977); T.W. Bamford, *Rise of the public schools: a study of boys' public boarding schools in England and Wales from 1837 to the present day* (London, 1967).

in particular, rooting their educational project in the classical models of the sixteenth century and deliberately remaining neutral in the face of rapidly advancing national systems of education. Jesuit schools Stonyhurst and Beaumont in England catered for as many as fifteen different nationalities, as did their school at Feldkirch in Austria, Stella Matutina, though that was mostly composed of Swiss, Westphalians, Silesians and boys from the Rhineland.²⁴ In England, the Jesuits educated Latin American nobility, as well as a network of Catholic families prospering in the colonies. Their nineteenth-century network of schools in Paris boarded almost 2,000 boys from a variety of regional backgrounds.²⁵ The Theresianum (1746) in Vienna fulfilled a similar function for the Austro-Hungarian empire; it was representative of a type of 'knight academy' or '*Ritterakademie*' that existed across the Hapsburg and German empires in places as diverse as Liegnitz and Lüneburg.²⁶

For girls, Catholic orders such as the Sacre Coeur order, founded by Sophie Barat, provided a Jesuit-style education for the daughters of the nobility and succeeded in maintaining an identifiably elite school for them at Rue de Varenne. Other major schools with a transnational client base included the Abbey of St Acheul in Amiens, the Institut der Englischen Fraeulein in Sankt Poelten, Lower Austria, the Bar Convent in York and the Holy Child, St Leonard's on Sea (now St Leonard's, Mayfield) on the south coast of England.

Another, somewhat more diverse group set apart from these elite international schools are what might be termed 'regional' elite schools, which appealed to like-minded families with deep pockets from a cluster of neighbouring countries. Examples of these abound in Eastern Europe, where schools such as Sacre Coeur in Lviv, the Piarist-run Collegium Nobilium in Warsaw and the Jesuit-run school at Chyrów attracted Polish, Lithuanian and Ukrainian nobles in large numbers in the later nineteenth century.²⁷ That there

²⁴ The Benedictine Kremsmunster Abbey offered a similarly high-status Catholic education in Upper Austria. ²⁵ In 1878–9, there were approximately 1,474 boarders at Parisian colleges, plus those boarding at the prestigious Saint Genevieve, which was not strictly speaking a college. Figures taken from John W. Padberg, *Colleges in controversy: the Jesuit schools in France from revival to suppression, 1815–1880* (Oxford, 1969), pp 283–4. ²⁶ Indeed, the present-day motto of Theresianum is not all that different to its historical motto. In 2014 it claims to create 'self-confident Austrians as well as Europeans with a global outlook'. For more on Theresianum and Austro-Hungarian noble education see Michael Hochedlinger, 'Mars ennobled the ascent of the military and the creation of a military nobility in mid-eighteenth-century Austria', *German History*, 17:2 (1999), 141–76; Gary B. Cohen, *Education and middle-class society in imperial Austria, 1848–1918* (West Lafayette, IN, 1996). ²⁷ A fascinating example of the peripatetic Catholic nobility is the Polish Count Eduard Alexander Ladislaus Graf O'Rourke (1873–1946), who was born in Minsk to a family with Russian and Holy Roman empire titles of Irish ancestry, was educated at Chyrów and Riga, later rising to bishop of Riga and then bishop of the Free City of Danzig in the 1920s.



Figure 3.1. St Leonard's pupils c.1860s (courtesy of the Archives of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus).

was movement of staff and clientele in elite education in the nineteenth century is not something that should be disputed – but its meaning remains elusive.

Another 'type' of transnational school was the small-scale metropolitan academy, typically offering an advanced education to the sons or daughters of mercantile and political elites, headed up by a foreign educationalist who capitalized on his personal exoticism to sell it to parents. Examples of such enterprises abound in Dublin and Paris, but the capacity to trace their importance over time is diminished by their association with an individual even when they were particularly brilliant or effective educators. This was not always the case of course. Sometimes such educators were reviled as 'hacks'. Gregor Von Feinaigle provides an apposite example of this latter phenomenon; he brought his itinerant brand of mnemonic education from Germany to Paris in 1806–7, and then to London, Edinburgh and Glasgow in the form of public lectures, before institutionalizing his system in Dublin city in 1813 in a school that outlasted its founder before finally closing its doors in 1830. His initial advertisement is worth quoting in full:

MNEMONICS: Experiments, Courses and Private Lectures.

Professor Von Feinaigle respectfully informs the nobility and gentry of Dublin and its vicinity that on the 11th instant he will give a public experiment on his New System of Mnemonics, the emolument of which will be in aid of the Fund for establishing the Dublin Female Penitentiary and another on the 16th of January for the benefit of the Richmond National Institution of the Industrious Blind at which her Grace the Duchess of Richmond has kindly consented to be present. Both experiments will be exhibited at the Rotunda at one o'clock. From the 11th, the list of subscription is open for two Courses of Lectures, one to be given every day at 11 o'clock and the other at 8 o'clock in the evening.²⁸

Based on the favourable reception accorded his 'experiments', Von Feinaigle's school was set up at a cost of somewhere in the region of £80 to £100, but his system of learning was later widely discredited.²⁹ His near-contemporary, Friederich Fröbel, combined popularity and influence with more credibility and greater longevity. This sort of educator-entrepreneur-style metropolitan or cosmopolitan academy usually appealed more strongly to a national elite and a more or less local client base, but we are insufficiently informed about schools with a ten- to twenty-year cycle, operating for profit, whose appeal was based on a combination of reputation and educational standard. Few such schools have left archives, and aside from fleeting appearances in the registers of more enduring high-profile boarding schools and the public prints, they remain regrettably obscure.

The search for cosmopolitan education, or the cosmopolitan ideal for transforming societies, has captivated theorists from other disciplines, but not historians. This is a product perhaps of the present-centred character of the debates on cosmopolitan education, which apply an ethical imperative to the promotion of a utopian ideal incompatible with historical readings of elite education. This ideal, expressed by Oscar and Starkey, is that the educated cosmopolitan ought to 'work to achieve peace, human rights and democracy within the local community and at a global level, by ... accepting personal responsibility and recognizing the importance of civic commitment'.³⁰ This is hardly conducive to an exploration of the aims of elite education in nineteenth-

28 'Lectures on mnemonics', *Freeman's Journal*, 21 Jan. 1813. 29 Michael Quane, 'The Feinaiglian Institution, Dublin', *Dublin Historical Record*, 19:2 (1964), 30–44. 30 Audrey Osler and Hugh Starkey, 'Learning for cosmopolitan citizenship: theoretical debates and young people's experiences', *Educational Review*, 55:3 (2003), 243–54 at 249, quoted in Andrew Peterson, 'The educational limits of ethical cosmopolitanism: towards the importance of virtue in cosmopolitan education and communities', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 60:3 (2012), 227–42.



century Europe, or perhaps, even in explorations of contemporary elite education, where the impulse for internationalization and the cultivation of cosmopolitan cultural capital seem entirely at odds with a moral or ethical imperative.³¹ Instead, the search for cosmopolitan education seems inextricably linked to the accumulation of cultural capital, as well as the status derived from being able to afford an expansive and expensive education. For some religious minorities within European polities, it served to reinforce bonds that were at least as important to them (usually more important) than national identity – religious sanctity and perseverance of faith.

OUTLIERS: GENDER AND RELIGION

In the developing literature on the international school, discussion of gender and religion is often suppressed in favour of a concentration on the instrumental outcome of a cosmopolitan education. This rather skews our understanding of why families chose to send their child to a different jurisdiction in the first place.³² As outlined in the previous section, religious and faith-based reasoning was often behind the decision to seclude children in order to protect them from unwanted influence. This is the very obvious motivation behind the pattern of elite Catholic education that existed across much of western and northern Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but it is also evident in the behaviour of other religious minorities. The disintegration of the three definitive European empires – Ottoman, Romanov and Hapsburg – in the late modern period coincided with the rise of nationally focused education systems that sidelined, but did not eradicate, faith-based minority elite education. The mid-nineteenth-century expansion of Jewish metropolitan education provides a corollary to Catholic education. The development of Jewish education can be attributed to the efforts of individuals such as Adolphe Cremieux, through the Alliance Israélite Universelle and its successor schools in Morocco, France, Tunisia and Jerusalem, but it also developed organically, as evidenced by the growth of minority Jewish elite education in Transylvania and Hungary.³³ Because most elite studies of education focus on specific national systems or national elites, pan-regional confessional elite education is often absent. Thus a

³¹ The problem is discussed in David Miller, '“Are they my poor?” The problem of altruism in a world of strangers', *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 5:4 (2002), 106–27.

³² This is true of the literature on school expansion, as has been noted elsewhere: see Maurice A. Garnier and Jerald Hage, 'Class, gender, and school expansion in France: a four-systems comparison', *Sociology of Education*, 64:4 (1991), 229–50. ³³ For an excellent overview of the 'absence' of minority elite education in Transylvania, see Aron Moskovits, *Jewish Education in Hungary, 1848–1948* (Philadelphia, 1964).



Unitarian, Catholic, Jewish or Calvinist regional elite group may hardly feature in a national historiography though it was part of a coherent transnational group. In addition to this – a major problem for those seeking to reconstruct the history of the international school – there is the problem of gender.

Although the most expensive contemporary Swiss schools are co-educational, they were not always so, and several of the most expensive schools in America remain single-sex,³⁴ as do such prominent British schools as Eton and Harrow. Partly because of this, but partly because of the male bias evident in elite studies, a gender imbalance has emerged in studies of education at secondary level. As a result, the entire female lines of elite families are sometimes relegated to 'merely present' in such studies. The work of James C. Albisetti, Rebecca Rogers and others has greatly improved our understanding of bourgeois education in French and German contexts, but in common with the historical literature on the education of boys in the nineteenth century, the focus of the histories of female education is overwhelmingly national.³⁵ Not only that, but elite theorists have consistently failed to engage with the female line, meaning that half of elite society is absent from the two literatures that most obviously relate to them. There is at least one area of elite education in the nineteenth century that is less subject to gender bias, but it too presents evidential difficulties as the archival record is so much more diverse than institutional elite education: this is domestic one-to-one tuition.

THE TUTOR, GOVERNESS AND ELUSIVE EDUCATION(S)

The position of the governess and tutor in the nineteenth century remains problematic, as a majority of historians of education have prioritized state-sponsored or institutional education over the less structured, deregulated economy of circulating private tutors that existed across Europe. Domestic tuition was long a feature of the lifestyle of European nobilities, but there was a notable expansion of the phenomenon from the 1770s, as Frank Musgrove and others have noted.³⁶ The priorities of the parents sponsoring elite one-to-one education are readily identifiable in the archival record, and can be illustrated by the letter appointing the Huguenot theologian André Rivet as tutor to

³⁴ Purnell School, New Jersey (1963), for example, is an all-girls school. ³⁵ James C. Albisetti, *Secondary school reform in imperial Germany* (Princeton, 1983); idem; *Schooling German girls and women: secondary and higher education in the nineteenth century* (Princeton, 1988); Rebecca Rogers, *From the salon to the schoolroom: educating bourgeois girls in nineteenth-century France* (Philadelphia, 2005). ³⁶ Frank Musgrove, 'Middle-class families and schools, 1780–1880: interaction and exchange of function between institutions', *Sociological Review*, 7:2 (1959), 169–78.



William II (1626–50), prince of Orange. This emphasized the need for the Calvinistic worldview of his father, William I, to be balanced with the French-inflected classical education the tutor was qualified to deliver, but with ultimate control over content to be decided by the prince and his advisors. This was one of the chief attractions of a tutor over an academy or school:

One needs to make sure that our aforementioned son will be taught and instructed in the fear of God, in good manners, and in all the modesty and civility suitable for his birth-right, directing the method of the exercises upon which we will decide as suitable.³⁷

Throughout the long eighteenth and well into the nineteenth century, the public discourse on elite education was dominated by a dialogue on the respective merits of institutional 'classical' education and the broader approach typically undertaken by private tutors or small 'academy'-style learning. This was the debate rekindled by Locke in *Some thoughts concerning education* (1693), where he argued that domestic instruction was the best possible means to inculcate the attributes of a 'gentleman'. The tutor remained a feature of the educational landscape into the twentieth century and across multiple societies. In his work on the Piedmontese elite, Anthony Cardoza has noted the isolating nature of such an education for young nobles trapped within the walls of their family estates and houses. If not educated at one of two important academies,³⁸ the Piedmontese nobility endured much the same style of private tuition as their British and Irish equivalents – a revolving sequence of private tutors and governesses imported directly into the home. Here, transnational educational capital was not something presented by the institution to an elite, but a service imported by private contract between a family (or head of household) and individual. This capital, in the case of the male tutor at least, was bestowed by another institution (as in the case of a graduate of Oxford, for instance), but the commodity is here something that is held by a person, not the state, or a service-provider. It cannot be said to have reinforced national elite belonging, nor indeed did it provide those receiving it with a network of international

³⁷ Quoted in Michael Green, 'A Huguenot education for the early modern nobility', *Proceedings of the Huguenots Society*, 30:1 (2013), 81. The more justly famous William III (1650–1702) was educated by a mixture of Dutch and English tutors and governesses in his early youth, with Frederick Rivet and Constantijn Huygens involved in his advanced education: see B. Rang, 'Letter across the North Sea: a Dutch source of John Locke's *Letters concerning education*' in Juliette Roding and Lex Heerma Van Voss (eds), *The North Sea and culture, 1550–1800* (Hilversum, 1996), p. 381. ³⁸ These were the Royal Military Academy at Turin and the Royal Carlo Alberto College (1816) at Moncalieri (1838): Anthony L. Cardoza, *Aristocrats in bourgeois Italy: the Piedmontese nobility, 1861–1930* (Cambridge, 1997), pp 139–45.



contacts in the way that an international school did. The role of tutor has been discussed as a guide within the literature on the 'Grand Tour' undertaken as part of the typical coming-of-age of the German and English nobility in the seventeenth (but particularly the eighteenth) century, but there are few studies of them from a pedagogic or socialization angle.³⁹ There are few prosopographies and no biographies as such. It is also difficult to ascertain, with any accuracy, the defining characteristics of the European tutor. In England preference was ordinarily given to graduates of Oxbridge; Huguenots were popular in both England and the Netherlands in the seventeenth century because of their dual identity as French and Protestant. In Poland in the later eighteenth century just being French was a passport into the homes of the nobility.⁴⁰

The high point of the profession of governess is generally held to have been the middle of the nineteenth century, and these educated, sometimes lonely women have left behind a significant corpus of writing, fiction and memoirs from which we might reconstruct their experience in a qualitative manner. To do so quantitatively is more difficult. In England, census figures reveal that by 1861 over 24,000 women were engaged at all social levels in the profession, many with non-elite families.⁴¹ Recent work on Irish elite education indicates that, as in England, this role went into decline in the second half of the nineteenth century as schools for girls became more popular. There was a 30 per cent drop in the number of registered governesses in the ten years between 1901 and 1911, when 2,043 and 1,432 were recorded.⁴² At least 527 of the 2,043 governesses in

39 For German nobles and a summary of relevant literature see Mathis Leibetseder, 'Across Europe: educational travelling of German noblemen in a comparative perspective', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 14:5 (2010), 417–49. For British and Irish grand tours see Stephen Conway, *Britain, Ireland, and continental Europe in the eighteenth century: similarities, connections, identities* (Oxford, 2011); Toby Barnard, *A new anatomy of Ireland: the Irish Protestants, 1649–1770* (New Haven, 2003); Michèle Cohen, 'The grand tour: constructing the English gentleman in eighteenth-century France', *History of Education*, 21:3 (1992), 241–57. 40 John Lawson and Harold Silver, *A social history of education in England* (London, 2013), p.168. For a discussion of the Polish context see Małgorzata Kamecka, 'Educating and passing knowledge: the role of private tutors in the formation of Polish youth of noble origins in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries', *Paedagogica Historica*, 43:4 (2007), 509–23; for Huguenots see Michael Green, 'A Huguenot education for the early modern nobility', *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society*, 30:1 (2013), 73–91. 41 Alice Renton, *Tyrant or victim? A history of the British governess* (London, 1991), p. 86. For more on the English tradition see Pamela Horn, 'The Victorian governess', *History of Education*, 18:4 (1989), 333–44; Ruth Brandon, *Other people's daughters: the life and times of the governess* (London, 2008). For the governess in the colonies, see Patricia Clarke, *The governesses: letters from the colonies, 1862–1882* (London, 1985). 42 John Logan, 'Governesses, tutors and parents: domestic education in Ireland, 1700–1880', *Irish Educational Studies*, 7:2 (1988), 1–18; Deirdre Raftery, 'The nineteenth century governess: image and reality' in Bernadette Whelan (ed.), *Women and paid work in Ireland, 1500–1930* (Dublin, 2000), pp 57–68.



1901 were foreign-born, with the greatest number of those coming from England (319), Germany (41), France (36), Scotland (29) and Switzerland (29).

The governess became an important figure not only in Britain and Ireland, but also across Europe from the seventeenth century. Irene Hardach-Pinke has argued that the governess ought to be seen as an intercultural educator.⁴³ In this sense the importation of a foreign non-relative into the domestic environment for the purpose of an intense form of education is a poorly understood form of complex transnational influence. Susan Bayley has continued this argument recently, referring to the profession as one without borders, and adding to a growing literature on a type of educator that may fairly be labelled liminal.⁴⁴ In a period of heightening nationalist differentiation these liminal women were increasingly identified according to national 'characteristics'. As Bayley notes:

The escalation of intercultural education by governesses in the mid nineteenth century coincided with the new interest in formulating, and debunking, national identities. Foreign governesses were caught up in this exercise and imagined as embodying the characteristics, especially the negative ones, of their country of birth. English governesses were perceived as brave, prissy, eccentric, class-conscious, morally upright and 'modern' in their teaching methods. German governesses were initially regarded as plain, prudish, knowledgeable, efficient, diligent, pedantic, strict, domestic, sentimental and musical; blatant German militarism darkened their image from the 1870s to make them appear ultra-nationalistic, domineering and treacherous. French governesses were seen as coquettish, rational, vain, venal, showy, superficial, immoral and expert on matters of dress and etiquette.⁴⁵

Self-conscious German governesses would pass themselves off as Austrian, or Alsatian, in Paris, while their French counterparts in England found themselves labelled sexually promiscuous and superficial.⁴⁶ Often fashion and trend dictated where a governess was likely to be in demand. For example, in Russia, where governesses were always in demand, there was a huge market for French-speaking governesses in the reign of Empress Elizaveta Petrovna (1741–62), who was a

43 Irene Hardach-Pinke, 'Intercultural education by governesses (seventeenth to twentieth century)', *Pedagogica Historica*, 46:6 (2010), 715–28. 44 Susan N. Bayley, 'The English miss, German fräulein and French mademoiselle: foreign governesses and national stereotyping in nineteenth- and early twentieth century Europe', *History of Education*, 43:2 (2014), 160–86; Wolfgang Gippert and Elke Kleinau, 'Interkultureller transfer oder befremdung in der fremde? Deutsche lehrerinnen im Viktorianischen England', *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, 52:3 (2006), 339. 45 Bayley, 'The English miss, German fräulein and French mademoiselle', p. 174. 46 Ibid., pp 179, 184.



noted Francophile and who encouraged the trend accordingly. Under Catherine the Great it became standard practice. But by the late nineteenth century it was British and Irish governesses that were in fashion.⁴⁷ Margaret Eager, an Irish woman from a relatively modest background, found herself governess to the four grand duchesses of Russia, the ultimately doomed daughters of Tsar Nicholas II, between 1898 and 1904.⁴⁸ This led to intercultural dialogue of the unwanted kind, when, as might have been expected, the four girls developed a Hiberno-English accent in their spoken English, and the tsar had to hire an English tutor to correct this.⁴⁹ The status of the governess as a useful or dangerous middle-class imposter in an elite environment lent itself to accusations at times of heightened national tension, and in some cases accusations of spying proved to have some foundation in fact.⁵⁰ Their status as a domestic threat, and as 'dirty', 'foreign' and dangerous is something that runs through both memoir and fiction in Russia, Britain and France.⁵¹

CONCLUSION

The central aim of this essay has been to draw attention to two major issues in the identification of distinct patterns in transnational elite schooling in nineteenth-century Europe, as well as to highlight the existence of schools that were 'global' or at least transnational in reach long before the twentieth century. The first – the essentially religious preoccupation of several of the major denominational providers – has been highlighted by others such as R.D. Anderson; the second is the struggle among minor religious groups such as Jewish, Orthodox Christian and various Protestant sects, for denominational provision in societies that policed or rejected them. These issues point to a critical gap in the literature on elite education, which has focused to date on national elite formation, and pursued quantitative surveys based on censal or state-derived data sets at the expense of specific institutions or clusters of institutions that served an elite group, or grouping. Likewise, the continuing inability of scholars to marry discussions of elite female education to broader discussions of elite theory, and the education of male elites is a significant

⁴⁷ For more on the middle-class version of domestic education in Russia see T.I. Staroverova, 'Home education in Russia', *Russian Education and Society*, 53:10 (2011), 23–36. ⁴⁸ Margaret Eager, *Six years at the Russian court* (New York, 1906). ⁴⁹ Charlotte Zeepvat, *From cradle to crown: British nannies and governesses at the world's royal courts* (Sutton, 2006). ⁵⁰ See the memoir of Alice Muriel Livingston Williamson, *What I found out in the house of a German prince* (London, 1915). ⁵¹ For the Russian case, see Ulrike Lentz, 'The representation of western European governesses and tutors on the Russian country estate in historical documents and literary texts' (PhD, University of Surrey, 2008), pp 91–166.



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obstacle in the way of a comprehensive history of European elite education. The last section engaged with a neglected element on the landscape of elite education – that of the domestic tutor or governess. Though these brought transnational or international capital directly into the elite domestic environment, far too little is known of their impact at a broader level, or as a profession. We may well sympathize here with any historian brave enough to attempt to reconstruct that experience of this Europe-wide phenomenon. Nonetheless, any survey of elite education in a transnational context ought not to overlook them.

