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Preface

The collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe and their subsequent gradual transition towards market economics and political pluralism, have created a new insecurity in both parts of the European continent. The familiar landmarks of the Cold war have become obscured by a new set of problems : ethnic unrest; mass migration; high unemployment; and political volatility. The EU and NATO, both noted in, and rationalised by, a bipolar world now find themselves challenged by the search for a new raison d'être, and the pressures of a new enlargement.

Against this background of shifting political signposts, the concept of European identity has acquired a new merging and a new relevance. The 'politics of seclusion' which once emphasised the boundaries of the European Community in its wider environment, have been replaced by the 'politics of inclusion' which transform boundaries into bridgeheads
and not only blur the distinctions between the EU and its neighbours but permit greater latitude within the EU itself.

The fall of the Berlin wall, the reinstatement of east-west communications, and the burgeoning traffic in ideas, tourism and trade all point to the need to open up for discussion the question of European identity. In particular, will it be possible to conceive of a European political identity that transcends the old East-West divide ? On what terms, and with what risk of reductio ad absurdum will it be possible to merge the European identity largely monopolised by the EU, with the political experiences, equally valid, of the former Soviet satellites ?

At the outset, it is worth asking why we should be concerned with 'European identity' at all. The problems of locating the precise geographical boundaries of the European continent are well-known and the cultural characteristics that may be peculiar to 'Europeans' are notoriously difficult to pin down partly because of their diversity and partly because European culture has been 'exported' to other continents. Nevertheless, we feel that an attempt should be made to explore the political dimensions of European identity at a time when the continent is coming too terms with the dissolution of its ideological diversions. At least three reasons may be advanced to justify such an exploration at this time.

The European Union (EU) now needs to face the question of its own further enlargement. One key element in determining the scope of this enlargement is the extent to which the intending applicants share a common political identity with existing EU member states. The answers to these questions are

important not only for the applicants themselves since it determines when, if at all, they may join, but also for the existing members whose economies will inevitably be affected by the admission of new states. Under the unilllllll arguments over the mobility of labour, cheap farm product and low cost textile manufacturing we may uncover more fundamental issues pertaining to political values, state-society relationships, civic duties and the rule of law. One of our objectives in this paper is to identify the 'bridges' and 'chasms' of civic culture that span, or reinforce, respectively, the former frontiers of Cold War Europe. Secondly, any analysis of political identity within the EU may be relevant to future evolution of a transnational gemenschaft among the existing member states. The first emergence of a concept of European citizenship, in the Maastricht Treaty, marks a preliminary, if rather crude attempt, to extend the raison d'être of the Single Market beyond its merely economic goals towards the creation of a political society. Thus the 'citizens' of the EU have replaced the 'workers' of the Rome Treaty and are invited to look towards the institutions of the EU, and the court of Justice in particular, to satisfy a range of needs in the legal and social realms that were hitherto the province of the nation-state. Thus fostering of a sense of political identity within the EU is presumed to provide a 'glue' that reinforces the patterns and purposes of a developing single market.

Thirdly, our discussion of political identity in A European context, is also intended to delineate a security dimension that is relevant to the concerns of the EU and the wider Europe at the present time. If political identity is linked to the performance of civic duties, the question of defending the society also arises. The notion of a 'pluralistic security community' (Deutsch 1968) may be particularly appropriate here. Deutsch characterised such a community as a collection of countries that were sufficiently integrated not to fear attack from one another and, therefore, in a position to abandon all defensive preparations with respect to other countries in the group. Such a concept is relevant to Europe today at a time when the erstwhile opponents, and putative justification, of NATO are now associates with it in a Partnership for Peace. The zone of neutral trust in the security area has been suddenly extended and while the zone of mutual trust may not be exactly coterminous with a zone of common political identity, there is a sense in which the two must be related and be mutually reinforcing. The crunch question in a common security community is 'whom are we prepared to defend in the event of an external aggression'? There can be no clear-cut answer to that question since circumstances vary; and individuals within societies may have very different views about participating in military conflicts; but the development of the CFSP in the Maastricht Treaty was a reflection of the linkage between security and the politico-economic designs of the EU.

As hinted already in our introductory remarks, the thrust of our investigation is into the political aspects of European identity. The term 'identity' itself belongs to many disciplines. In psychology we are concerned with the identity of the individual, the traits that make that person unique. In anthropology, identity relates to ethnic, tribal and national characteristics that distinguish those societies from other analogous societies. A useful metaphor that may be borrowed from anthropology (Levine and Campbell 1972) is that of 'contour lines' of identity that encircle 'core' areas. According to this analogy a sense of political identity would not be located in a neat watertight community but would 'shade' almost imperceptibly towards other communities with divergent or even opposing identities.. Instead of clear cut lines of demarcation between political communities, we have 'grey' areas where identity is ambiguous, vague, ill-defined or changeable. Societies possessing a common political identity have an idea of who 'we'are and who the 'others' are that define the borders of a nascent political community.

For purposes of this paper we assume that a society shares a common political identity inasmuch as it accepts within itself a redistribution of resources and an equitable pattern of rights and duties upheld by common institutions responsible for the authoritative allocation of values.

Taking this as our working definition of political identity, we believe that a discussion of such identity needs to be focused along three separate dimensions. Popular support for 'European' policy-making; tensions between 'national' and European' identities; and elite-driven promotions of European political identity through the use of symbols, expounded competencies for EU institutions and the introduction of a EU citizenship.

Popular support for a European political identity can be measured by reference to the regular Eurobarometer survey. Such surveys must be used with a certain amount of caution since the underlying motivations for expressions of attachment to a European identity are not always clear. Analysis of Eurobarometer data in 1990 (Reif 1993) reveals a stronger attachment to countries, regions and localities than to 'Europe as a whole' and to the EC. However, the EU (in 1992) was not viewed as a threat to national identities and cultures but rather as complementary. There were however significant variations amongst member states with the Danes and the British most likely to see the EU as a threat to national identity and the Italians and Portuguese as least likely to do so. Analysis of Irish attitudes towards European identity after ten years of EC member ship demonstrated a belief that Irish nationalism was not only compatible with European identity but would be best protected by it (Coakley 1983) . Eurobarmeter surveys in Eastern Europe show a much stronger attachment to a European identity in some countries (eg Romania) than exists within the EU itself; the implication here is that aspirations to join (or re-join) the West coupled with a strong desire to distance oneself from a former Russian hegemony are translated into fervent pro-European sentiments. Moreover, where state institutions are viewed as 'weak' or dysfunctional the lure of EU membership is all the greater a sentiment that, perhaps, explains greater attachments to European identity in 'Mediterranean' members of the EU than in the Nordic states.

European identity, like any identity can be defined in terms of 'others' Clearly, for West Europeans the other was strongly represented by the Eastern Bloc prior to 1989 and indeed the whole rationale for the EC was largely based on assumptions of liberal democratic superiority in the west. But the USA also provides a powerful other against which European identity can be defined. The individualism, idealism, optimism and homogeneity of American society contrasts strongly with the well-developed sense of social responsibility, pragmation, realism and diversity of European Society. The European continent is littered with permanent reminders of human failure : the failure to unite without dominating; the failure to draw boundaries without warfare. The American continent is replete with invisible signs of human achievement and rational argument : a finely-tuned federalism rooted in a 200-year old constitution; state boundaries drawn on maps and never disputed; a border with Canada that has always been the longest underfunded border in the world; and giant monuments to human ??? , skyscrapers, highways and everywhere the evidence of conspicuous affluence.

European identity has been consciously inculcated by elites in the belief that it will produce a political 'cement' that will assist the process of economic integration. Such a policy has its ongoing in the Admnino Reports of 1985 and 1986 in which a number of recommendations were set out designed to move the public consciousness towards a more positive in vision of the community as guaranteeing a higher quality of life and not merely a higher standard of living : no longer would economic benefits be sufficient, but there would now be added important legal, cultural and educational dimensions. The promotion of cross-frontier youth exchanges and town-twinning schemes were intended
to foster a sense of European solidarity. Symbols such as the EC flag (a gold circle of stars on a blue ground) and a maroon passport for EC nationals were to become the outward and visible signs of a new inner sense of 'feeling European'. Many of the ideas have, of course, been developed in the Maastricht Treaty : a concept of EU citizenship; consular assistance in third countries; an EU ombudsman and a new 'European' dimension for education.

In briefly sketching these three perspectives on European identity, it is important to emphasise that this identity is best viewed as being an aspect of national identity not a replacement for it. Unless it were possible to fashion a European identity from materials at least as morally valid as those by which national identity is shaped, there is a danger that a European nationalism would simply reproduce a fortion the inherent weaknesses of national identity, or nationalism, at the state level. As Smith (1992:76) has posed the question : 'will not a unified Europe magnify the virtues and defects of each of Europe's national identities, precisely because it has been built in their images? The interpretation of European and national identities must be allowed to develop spontaneously in response to new form of loyalty and obligation. The development of multlayered authority ranging from regional to transnational institutions implies multiple identities that are complementary rather than conflictual. 'If we accept pluriformity and polycertaism as hallmarks of European civilisation, the questions of how to make cultural pluralism feasible, and which formal and informal networks are most likely to promote

the participation of citizens in the European political and social community, will have to be addressed (Garcia 1993:26). Much the same point has been made by Meehan (1993) when she sees a new European citizenship emerging that is expressed through an "increasing complex configuration of common community institutions, states, national and transnational voluntary associations, regions and alliances of regions" (Meehan 1993:   ). This view of European identity seems infinitely preferable to one where it gradually displaces national identity. This latter view which sees the EU as a kind of 'vacuum cleaner' that absorbs the dust and cobwebs of national identities and replaces them with a shining new European identity suffers from a number of problems. The borders of Europe are not sufficiently well-defined to encompass a cohesive sense of identity that is distinct from its immediate external environment. Moreover, there persists greater differences between certain European countries than others and, in particular, the cultural 'gap' between Northern and Southern Europe makes the emergence of a pan-European identity that replaces national identities extremely problematic. If we conceive, instead, of European identity being a component of national identities and the latter as likely to persist, we are in a position to consider the evolution of a European transnational political community based on the open acknowledgement of diversity. A Danish writer has reinforced this point by portraying Europeanism as an object of national competition. Citing the results of a 1991 newspaper survey that showed the French to be much more 'European' than the Danes, the headline read "French enthusiasm puts Danes to shame". Here European identity becomes part of national identity and, in almost self-contradictory fashion, one needs to be a 'good European' to be a 'good' Frenchman (Hedetoft 1995).

European identity and European political identity now need to be conceived of separately. The former, as we may see, as relatively static, defensive and all-inclusive. Political identity perscribes a mobilisation towards a political goal and although rooted in the broader cultural identity, is conceptually distinct from it. European political identity is oriented towards the aspirational goal of a European political system. Such a political identity is geared towards the mobilisation of resources to support a political system that is rooted in, but nevertheless transcends, the existing nation-states. Such a European political system currently consists of common EU institutions, a framework of legal obligations and joint policy-making processes based on shared sovereignty. The elaboration and extension of this European system is not aimed at promoting the EU in order to role back the influence of the nation-states. On the contrary, it is open acknowledgement that national (and regional) levels of government are compatible with the European level because none of these levels can function along and achieve optional outcomes without co-ordination with the other levels. This emergence of multi-level government (Sharpe 1993) in Europe, in particular, can be seen as a response to increased interdependence and globalisation in the international system (Wendt 1992) and the process may be cynical in the sense that a split-level political architecture can dissipate further the centripetal tendencies of the traditional nation-state.

A European political identity is likely to have the greatest chances of survival if it rests on widespread perceptions of legitimacy. This legitimacy at the European level, may be nurtured not simply by readjusting the legislative relationship between the European Parliament and the other EU institutions, but by the universal recognition that civic rights and duties, protection of minority rights, the rule of law, true accountability, equitable distribution of resources and so on operate at all levels of government and genuinely permeate the interface between the economic and political domains of any transnational system. Support for a European political identity can be discussed in terms of a European political culture that is analogous to the political cultures of nation-states. From this perspective, a European political identity develops on the basis of shared assumptions, shared values, and shared conceptions of participative roles. European political identity would rest, firstly, on the assumptions made about the institutions existing at the European level. Are they perceived to be effective, efficient and legitimate? Secondly, what values are attached to these institutions and the outcomes emanating there from? Are these seen to be rational, fair and useful? As participants, how do Europeans see their role in these institutions? Can an individual make a difference ? Does the individual expect to receive equitable treatment from the system ? Are the criteria for participation/influence seen to be rational, equitable and beneficial ? Another set of criteria for judging a European political identity is the cognitive dimension. How much does the individual know about

the system? How do the institutions function? How are they elected/appointed ? How does the individual interact with these institutions? A final set of criteria are the affected ones. How much loyalty/support is given by the individual to the system at the European level?

Analysis of Eurobarometer data can give us partial answers to some of these questions. Diffuse support for the general process of European unification increased between 1973 and 1990 (from 63% to 81%) and the proportion of respondents opposed to European unification remained static during the same period. Nevertheless, these figures nothing more than a 'permissive consensus' since those saying they would 'regret the dissolution' of the EC did not increase significantly during the same two decades. (Reif 1993:142-3). As the only elected institution in the EU and the one which, if any institution does, links the voter to the 'European political system', the European Parliament provides a useful focus for additional data relating to a European political identity. A generally favourable impression of the Parliament was consolidated between 1986 and 1990 (40% saying they had a rather good impression in 1986 and 54% saying the same in 1990). The evaluative dimension of opinion towards the European Parliament displays a modest improvement between 1977 and 1990 (the index rising from 2.49 to 2.80 on a scale of 0-5). On the key question of attitudes towards a hypothetical 'European government responsible to the EP' there was a steady rise (1987-1990) from 49% in favour to 54% in favour, but with substantially lower figures in the UK and Denmark. All these rising levels of cognitive, evaluative and affective support were seriously eroded from 1991 onwards in the wake of debates over Masstricht, disillusionment about the SEM and economic recession. The instinctive reaction of elates to this downturn in popular support has been to explore ways in which electorates can be more deeply involved in the integration process of the EU. But there is also a need for further information. AS consistent finding in opinion surveys is that those who are best informed about the EU tend to be the most supportive : the cognitive and affective dimensions of political identity run hand in hand. However, this is not a watertight correlation: in Denmark every household saw the Maastricht Treaty and the referendum produce a negative result; and in Ireland few people read the TEU but the positive vote was substantial. The introduction of a concept of citizenship enables us to take the discussion of political identity several steps further. Citizenship is directly linked to that of political identity in the sense that citizens can be defined as the privileged bearers of a common political identity. This common political identity can be usefully contrasted with both insiders (ie. inhabitants of Europe but denied the rights of citizenship) and outsiders (ie those who live geographically beyond the borders of 'Europe') As S. Garcia (1993:21) expressed it :

     (T)he practice of citizenship becomes a method of social inclusion which gives people who differ in age, sex, beliefs or colour of skin the same basic entitlements. It is this aspect of citizenship that has contributed to the legitimacy of the modern state. Citizenship has become also an element of legitimation for the new Europe.

The challenge is where to draw the line for inclusion. European citizenship, if based loosely on a set of rights and duties, will have an appeal that transcends the old Cold War frontiers. One of the more appealing aspects of EU membership to countries in E. Europe may be access to a citizenship that is linked to internationally guaranteed human rights and which assumes basis democratic structures and process at the national level. European citizenship, if extended to E. Europe, provides an antidote to authoritarian party politics, reactionary religious influence in legislation, and an emollient against upsurges of racist, and ethnic tensions in countries where hitherto quiescent minorities may suddenly erupt into violence. Broadly accepted European norms of political behaviour, once they become embedded in ???-European notions of citizenship, could provide a powerful insurance against any regression towards quasi-communist role or dangerous lurches toward virulent nationalist authoritarianism,

The linkage between political identity and citizenship presupposes the need for a study sense of community underlying binding together people between whom the rights and duties of citizenship are exchanged. Although the nation-state is likely to remain the political entity for which people are willing to pay taxes, fight in wars and invest considerable emotional support, the possibility of rights and duties being accorded and exacted at other political levels cannot be excluded. Meehan (1993) has

pointed out that almost all Europeans have multiple identities: we may for example be trade unionists, Basques and taxpayers as well as citizens of the Spanish state. In view of resurgent regional consciousness, in both parts of Europe, not to mention overlapping multilateral organisations at the European level,Meehan argues that we can enjoy several identities at the same time and receive rights from and owe duties to multiple levels of political authority. The notion of citizenship, in both parts of Europe, could be similarly fragmented, allowing us to accord different amounts of emotional attachment to different levels of authority and, in a pragmatic way, we can opt for justice in a European court without giving our lives in a European army, and pay a European environmental tax without supporting a common curriculum in European schools. The linkage between our political identity and our citizenship is neither direct nor obvious. If citizenship entails the legal expression of certain rights and obligations these can be attached to various levels of political authority to which we accord varying amounts of emotional attachment. As time passes, the evaluative perception of benefits derived from specific ??? of authority will being new levels of affective support, thus constantly changing the mix of rationality and sentiment from which the sense of political identity is moulded.