

United or Divided We Stand? Perspectives on the EU's Challenges

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IDENTITY FORMATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: OVERCOMING LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY THROUGH DEMOS FORMATION

ERIN O'LEARY, Liverpool John Moores University

ABSTRACT

The dream of the European Union imagined by the founding fathers was for European citizens to identify more and more with Europe, leading to an eventual transfer of attachment from the nation to the supra-nation. Following this dream, the EU has attempted to forge a European identity using the same archetypes used by the nation when constructing national identities. This has had the resulting consequence of placing the EU in conflict with national identities rather than succeeding in the aim of superseding or existing alongside them. Instead, what is needed is a solidly defined demos identity which does not rely on the archetypes used to form national identities, and thus moves away from pre-conceived, post-Enlightenment views of identity formation. The difficulty comes from the significant role played by the existence of a common language in collective identity formation, and the democratic participation possibilities such a common language offers to the collective. However, given that collective identity can be argued to be an artificial construct, we can deconstruct it and remove language's position as a significant marker in collective identity formation, and thus begin to reconstruct a collective demos at the European level which allows for democratic participation but doesn't rely on a common language and which doesn't pit the European identity against national one.

INTRODUCTION

This paper is a journey of identity and a discovery of European identity, as it is and what it could become. What follows is an exploration of collective identity formation and the role of language in collective identity. This discussion considers the role of archetypes and symbols when forging a collective identity, and an explanation of how the nation has utilised such archetypes in order

to foster loyalty and forge collectives at the national level. Through understanding the archetypes used to forge a demos at national level it is possible to critically assess collective identity at the EU level, and as such, discover why the EU has failed to successfully forge a true European demos. What this ultimately leads to is a deconstruction and subsequent reconstruction of European collective identity, with the aim of mapping out a template for successful demos formation within the European Union.

COLLECTIVE IDENTITY FORMATION

'Identity is a demanding concept as it aims to deal with persistence and change, similarity and difference, objectivity and subjectivity, the collective and the individual level of social and political understanding of the self, all at the same time.'¹ The paradoxically opposed concepts of similarity and difference that are contained within the general definition of identity can certainly cause confusion, but our 'self' (individual) and our 'group' (collective) are equally influential and co-dependent when it comes to our identity. Acceptance of diversity implies the dialogue between different identities. Identity is a dynamic concept and involves the self-identification of individuals with certain values and symbols.

Our identity is built on a cultural pluralism that is related to our social history, the present norms by which our society lives by and through identification with artificially constructed social symbols or artefacts.² There is evidentially an internal aspect to identity, perhaps this is what we could call 'individual identity': the identification with the self on an ethnic, sexual and gendered level; as well as an external aspect, our 'collective identity'. This external aspect could

¹ S. Duchesne, Sophie, 'Waiting for a European Identity...Reflections on the Process of Identification with Europe', *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, Taylor & Francis (Routledge): SSH Titles, 2008, 9 (4), p. 402.

² C. Matiuta, 'How to build the European Identity? Attitudes towards the European Union across its countries', *Journal of Identity and Migration Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2013, p. 3.

perhaps be described as the identification of the self with our immediate society or social norms, politics and common cultural symbols, as opposed to those of others in alternative societies.³ It is entirely possible that language is the link between the 'internal self' and the 'external self' when it comes to identity. Our linguistic sphere, having been present with us since birth, almost forms a part of our internal self, as well as being a limiting force on how we experience the external world and how the external self interacts in society. This line of thought fits in with the post-modern concept of identity, which defines identity as being constructed by discourse.⁴ Yet to rely on discourse as a constructing factor of our identity as Europeans does not seem possible, not only given the multilingual nature of the European Union and thus the lack of a common unifying language between all citizens, but also given the effect language has on world view.

Whilst vastly oversimplifying the field of study, Western linguistic theory (such as Sapir-Whorf's linguistic relativity hypothesis and Ferdinand de Saussure's theory on the arbitrary nature of the sign) tells us that each language encodes a particular experience of the world and that its use might predispose its speakers to see the world according to the experience encoded in it. In doing so, a common language becomes the founding building block of what we, as individuals, feel to be our identity in the collective sense. Our sense of belonging as a collective demos within a defined state-like entity has largely been determined by the language that we speak to others within that demos. Civilization is uniquely and specifically in-formed by a given language; that language is the unique and specific matrix of its civilization.⁵ Concerning the EU this theory of language could hinder integration and state-citizen communication possibilities for a number of reasons. For instance, a law that does not correspond to the linguistic sensitivities of our society

³ The idea of collective identity needing an 'other' to define itself against in order to form a comprehensive identity is something that will be discussed later in this chapter.

⁴ S. Ivic and D. Lakicevic, 'European Identity: Between Modernity and Postmodernity', *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 24:4, p. 399.

⁵ G. Steiner, 'Whorf, Chomsky and the Student of Literature', *New Literary History*, Vol. 4, No. 1, The Language of Literature (Autumn, 1972), p. 18.

is not regarded as "our law" but is seen as something foreign. Without a conducive language, positive law cannot create legal mindedness.⁶ If the citizen does not see European law as relating to them because its structure differs to the linguistic and legal mindedness they themselves are used to within their national law, they will be less likely to see themselves as European or identify with the political structure as a whole.⁷ In the words of Dieter Grimm:

Comme la langue, le droit a dans ses origines, son développement et sa structure, un caractère foncièrement populaire et indigène qui manifeste le particularisme historique, culturel et national de chaque peuple. 'La langue et le droit ont une histoire, c'est-à-dire qu'il y a en eux un lien qui réunit le passé au présent, la nécessité à la liberté' écrit Grimm;⁸ 'Le droit positif d'un peuple est partie intégrante de sa langue et comme celle-ci, prend naissance et se développe de manière organique', écrit quant à lui Gustave Hugo.⁹⁻¹⁰⁻¹¹

Does this then mean that 'there can be no European public sphere because there is no European people[?]' (in the sense of a demos possessing a collective identity that would serve as a frame for political unity); and that there can be no European people because there is no common European language?'¹² Not necessarily so. Language, or more specifically multilingualism, has undoubtedly limited the democratic participation and also integration possibilities within the European Union, but to place the blame on language alone would be to overlook the broader

⁶ B. Grossfield, 'Language and the Law', *Journal of Air Law and Commerce*, vol. 50, 1984-1985, p. 803.

⁷ Further to this, examples throughout ECJ case law demonstrate the recurring issue of a lack of legal certainty caused by translation errors in legal documents. The ECJ has continually been faced with cases concerning linguistic discrepancies between different language versions of European law since its naissance (see, N. Urban, 'One legal language and the maintenance of cultural and linguistic diversity?', *European Review of Private Law*, 2000). When interpreting legislation that is available in 24 languages, the ECJ must necessarily privilege the language version that they deem to be in accordance with their perception of the legislative intent of the drafters, thereby affording certain language versions a higher status than others. Thus, whether due to the need for comparison across numerous language versions, or whether due to translation inaccuracies, the ability of the citizen to rely on their own native language version of a regulation, directive or article can never be assured and as such, neither can the legal certainty of Union legislation. As such, how can there be unity in diversity if that unity is based on an unequal recognition of languages and differing levels of legal certainty based on the inadequacy of language?

⁸ Leçon inaugurale prononcée par J. Grimm à l'Université de Berlin en 1841 : *Über die Alterthümer des deutschen Rechts*, in VI. Schr., Bd 8, p. 547, cité apr A. Dufour (1974) 164.

⁹ G. Hugo, 'Les lois ne forment pas la seule source des vérités juridiques,' 4 (1815 :4) *Civilistisches Magazin* 117.

¹⁰ M-J. Campana, 'Vers un langage juridique commun en Europe?', *European Review of Private Law* 1, (200), p. 35.

¹¹ English Translation: *As with language, the law, in its origins, development and structure has a fundamentally common and local nature which expresses the distinctive historical, cultural and national identity of each nation. Language and the law have a history, that is to say, that there is a link which reunites the past with the present, need with freedom. The substantive law of a nation is an integral part of its language and as such, comes into being and grows in an organic way.*

¹² P. A. Kraus, *A union of diversity: language, identity and polity-building in Europe*, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

picture. The wider issue to consider is identity, which of course includes the significantly influential role of a common language. If democratic participation within the EU is limited because of its multilingual nature, and this is so because of the significant role of language in collective identity formation, then surely the solution for the EU lies in creating a demos that is dissociated from the pre-condition of a common language. In order to navigate around the language issues of the European Union and the democratic participation blocks it presents, it is necessary to look beyond the language regime and search for a solution that does not necessarily rely on language being a solution to the language problem. What is meant by this is that in looking further into identity construction, we can hope to understand the root of the problem and thus find an alternative solution to the democratic participation issues that arise due to multilingualism.

THE ARTIFICIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF COLLECTIVE IDENTITY AND NATIONAL COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

According to Anthony D. Smith, three undeniably significant features of collective identity are those of: 1) a shared history, 2) common myths and identification with artificial symbols, and 3) the collective identification with the nation and national identification.¹³ Thus, our collective identity is formed through a complex yet artificial series of identifications within a certain social group, the members of which are subject to identification with the same set of artificial symbols as we are. In being based on artificially constructed archetypes it is certainly plausible to reckon that these artificial constructs could, over time, be reconstructed to form new and different symbols and archetypes with which the collective comes to identify with and subsequently form

¹³ See R. Poole, *Nation and Identity*, Routledge, 1999. Particularly Chapter. 1, Section. 1 'the nation: imagination and culture', which discusses the theories of Benedict Anderson concerning the roles of emblems, symbols, war commemorations and language in imagining the community, or feeling like you belong to a collective.

their collective identity. After all, our collective identity is determined by artificial external forces rather than pre-determined internal forces.

The most effectively constructed and clear archetypes and symbols of a collective are those created at the national level. Flags and anthems are the most obvious examples of symbols that allow simple identification between the citizen and the national collective:

National identities do what collective identities do in general: they are stories that combine a series of events in texts, songs and images which some people recognize as being part of their particular we, i.e. as a collective identity. In addition, national identity constructions have succeeded in imposing themselves as a hegemonic identity in a territorially bounded political community. This exclusiveness is built into a story which links people defined as citizens of a political community. This story is transmitted to and learned by new generations, practised in national rituals and objectified in songs (anthems) and images (flags).¹⁴

National identity formation is a relatively new phenomenon that gives the collective geographical borders within which to solidify their collective sentiment at this level.

According to Smith, the rise of the nation state and thus national identity is strongly linked to the emergence of democratic civic society in the West (following the Enlightenment), affirming the relationship between a defined people or demos and democratic participation. Democracy emerged out of revolutions in emerging nations (such as France and America) as the people could identify a defined structure within which they could enforce their rights. According to Smith, what we now understand as identity contains: 'a named human population sharing a historical territory, common memories and myths of origin, a mass, standardized public culture, a common economy and territorial mobility, and common legal rights and duties for all members of the collectivity.'¹⁵ Nationalist scholars also insist that a common language is vital to the fostering of a national identity. In critiquing Smith's work on national identity, John Erik Fossum

¹⁴ K. Eder, 'A Theory of Collective Identity: Making sense of the Debate on a 'European Identity'', *European Journal of Social Theory*, vol. 12, no. 4, November 2009, p. 432.

¹⁵ A. D. Smith, 'National Identity and the idea of European Unity', *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944)*, vol. 68, no. 1, January 1992, p. 60.

adds the vital factor of 'national identity [as] based on the conception of a collective national consciousness, whose sources are culturally based but need not be predetermined or given and can be constructed'¹⁶, an element which will prove fundamental when later discussing how the EU can move forward with identity construction.

If language plays such an important role in the construction of the national self then it follows that it must play an important part of the process of nation creation also. Does this then mean that the European Union cannot define itself, and does not truly "exist" until the identity of its people has been constructed? If so, demos creation through European identity formation is of vital importance for the democratic legitimacy of the Union in that democratic participation is impossible if there are, technically speaking, no people. There cannot be a nation without a people, and if the cultural assimilation of the people is largely influenced by their common collective identity which is by in large forged by their common language, then the 'nation' cannot be conceived of without there first being a national identity (not geographically speaking, of course).

What is clear about the collective identity is that we, as humans, need defined categories that we can identify with in order to form and understand our collective identity. On a collective level, identification with defined systems, symbols, ideologies and archetypes, all of which are artificial constructions, leads to collective identity formation. Therefore it should logically follow that it should be possible to deconstruct this idea in order to then re-construct new artificial components of identity formation to form a supra-national demos. By removing language's position as the most significant marker in collective identity formation, it could be possible to form a collective demos at the European level which allows for democratic participation.

¹⁶ J. E. Fossum, 'Identity Politics in the European Union', *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 23, No. 4, (October 2001), p. 378.

EUROPEAN IDENTITY AT PRESENT AND ITS FAILURES

There is no doubt that the construction of a European identity is still in process. The EU has made several attempts to foster an image of a united Europe in the hope of creating a sense of well-being within the collective. Cristina Matiuta remarks upon the “in-process” state of the European identity, noting the similarities between European identity construction and national identity construction: ‘The process has an objective dimension (territory, sets of common legal rights and duties) and a subjective one (symbols as flag, anthem, a Europe day, a motto, cultural/educational exchange meant to create a sense of solidarity to the EU project, to expose younger generation to patterns of cooperation and to emphasize the unity-in diversity-rather than difference)’.¹⁷ Thus, in its attempt to form an identity, it would seem that the EU has cookie cut certain subjective symbols of national identity formation and tried to fit them into the setting of the EU. Things such as the European flag, the anthem, and the European passport were created to support the aim of forming a common collective European identity. However, all of these things have been created and introduced into the European consciousness much later than declarations and regulations on economic, legal and political unification. It took almost thirty years for the flag to become officially recognized by the European Union. Likewise, it took seven years before the Community adopted Beethoven's Ode to Joy as the European anthem.¹⁸ The EU has tried to use these symbols as a means of giving its citizens instruments of identification with the aim of creating a feeling of belonging and forging a true sense of citizenship. Many issues arise from these attempts: firstly, identity is more than just a series of identifications; and secondly, its choice of archetypes and symbols mirrors those utilised by the nation state in

¹⁷ Matiuta, ‘How to build the European Identity? Attitudes towards the European Union across its countries’, pp. 3-4.

¹⁸ M. Abélès, ‘Identity and borders: an anthropological approach to EU institutions’, *Twenty-First Century Papers*, vo. 4, 2004, p. 6.

solidifying the collective identity of a nation.¹⁹

What these attempts at symbolism show is that the European Union understands what is needed to forge a people: powerful artificially created symbols that impose themselves onto the collective subconscious and consequently create a sense of belonging. The EU's error has been to copy the symbols used by the nation state. In doing so, the EU has in fact placed itself in conflict with national identities rather than alongside them. If we, as a collective, are to understand and appreciate how Europe is imagined, it is important both to take EU symbolic initiatives seriously, and to try and grasp the specificity of these symbols and the peculiar conditions of their use. What is evident is that legal and economic integration alone will not create a united Europe.²⁰ Without an identity the EU will continually find it difficult to validate its existence, and legitimate democratic participation will not be possible. As Chrysochoou and Warleigh separately point out, 'The absence of a European demos, that is, a 'community of citizens linked to each other by strong democratic bonds and pressing to acquire a measure of effective control through formal or informal means over government' is the principle problem faced by architects of democratisation in the EU'.²¹ Christopher Lord is even more emphatic in his assertion that, 'institutional innovations can only go so far in removing perceptions of a democratic deficit in EU politics: without 'a shared identity, a common deliberative forum, and an open system of communications', citizens are unlikely to be aware of whatever institutional change is effectuated'.²²

¹⁹ See M. Bruter, *Citizens of Europe? The Emergence of a Mass European Identity*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, Ch. 4 sub-section on 'Symbols of Europe', pp. 81-85 in which Bruter outlines the EU's utilisation of a flag, an anthem, a single currency and other symbols. He does this following a discussion which defines symbols as, 'an emblem, a flag, a name, an allegory, an anthem, or any other element that could be used to attach a physically apprehensible signifier to a Nation, a State, or any other human collectivity', (p. 75) reaffirming the use of such symbols at national level.

²⁰ M. Sassatelli, 'Imagined Europe: The Shaping of a European Cultural Identity through EU Cultural Policy', *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 5, No. 4, (November 2002), p. 435.

²¹ See A. Warleigh, *Democracy and the European Union: theory, practice and reform*, Sage, 2003, p. 109; and D. Chrysochoou, *Democracy in the European Union*, London, Tauris, 1998, p. 89.

²² C. Lord, *Democracy in the European Union*, Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.

TOWARDS A RECONSTRUCTED EUROPEAN DEMOS

What must instead be done by the European Union is the forging of something innovative; leading the way in creating new and different symbols upon which contemporary identity can thrive on rather than relying on the traditional archetypes used by national identity formation. Only then will it be able to create a Union in which true democratic participation is possible. 'For people to feel European, the European Union institutions have to become more meaningful and inclusive for ordinary citizens. The main challenge for the EU integration project is to invent new ways and materialize in practice a sense of belonging with Europe.'²³

If the EU lacks the preconditions of nationhood meaning it is therefore deficient both as an idea and as a process, we should not be forming its identity on the post-Enlightenment, late 18th century Western ideas of nation, but rather on a different set of preconditions that we equally artificially construct. Given that the standards of national identity formation are relatively new in their existence (as new as the concept of nation state as we currently understand it), there is hope that we can once again formulate something novel and unprecedented that fits into the supranational existence of the Union. Doing so would add great integrity, legitimacy and stability to contemporary identity formation at the European level. As John Erik Fossum observes: 'The challenge is to understand how identity formation takes place in the contemporary world'.²⁴ As the EU does not fit into any of our traditional understandings of nation or state formation, it must find a contemporary manner of conducting identity formation that fits into its contemporary condition. Discovering a way to forge a European demos is the starting point for the EU to become more united politically, socially, economically and culturally, and to become a democratically legitimate entity. As we know, the EU has adopted several concepts that would

²³ Matiuta, 'How to build the European Identity? Attitudes towards the European Union across its countries', p. 10.

²⁴ J. E. Fossum, 'The European Union in search of an identity', *European Journal of Political Theory*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (2003), 319-340.

normally, or historically be associated with the nation state: a single currency, the common market, the supremacy of EU law, a flag, an anthem etc. Yet the most traditional mechanisms for socialising a people are still held at national level: a common language, a common heritage, a national education system. As stated earlier, the problem isn't that the EU has only been able to emulate some of these characteristics, it is rather than it attempted to emulate any of them at all. Rather than forming a supra-national identity that exists with the same strength and alongside national identities, it has instead made something weak yet opposing which has led to low levels of identification, a defensive attitude towards the EU by its citizens, and a lack of democratic participation possibility. In order to stop this attitude from perpetuating the European Union needs to decide upon new archetypes that aren't the same as those that national identity is based upon. Doing so would allow the peoples of Europe to take on this additional identity without feeling as though they were sacrificing their national identity. It is through finding its identity and forging a collective identity for its peoples that the questioned democratic participation possibility within the European Union can begin to be overcome. By forging such an identity without the archetype of a common language in particular, the democratic viability of the EU as a whole would no longer be dependent on communication possibilities in the same way as the nation state. Whether or not the European Union is moving towards, or even desires to move towards a more 'nation-state' type role is of little consequence. The fact is that one of the founding principles of the EU is respect for democracy, and so in order to uphold this the EU must establish greater and more equal communicative participation possibilities for the speakers of all 24 official languages within its borders. But, for democracy to be possible, there must be a demos.

When it comes to European identity formation, 'some scholars believe that the European Union has marked the start of a new kind of political system which is free from any kind of exclusive commitment on the part of its citizens — be it because of the development of a basic global

solidarity or because of the transformation of political decision systems from governments to multi-level governance'.²⁵ Because of this, many feel that identification with the European Union 'would be a unique process, based on different kinds of feelings of belonging than existing identification with a nation'.²⁶ Others have argued that 'there can only be a European identity if it is *civic* – based on a 'social contract' – and not *cultural* – based on a shared tradition'.²⁷ All of these arguments have valid points, and different though their approach might be in substance, one thing that they all agree on is that European identity needs to be something *different*. Whilst I agree that exclusive commitment to the EU is not necessary for European identity formation to take place, commitment beyond political allegiance most certainly is. Not only that but, as many scholars also suggest, this process must be unique and comprise of different kinds of feelings than those bound up in national identity commitment.

As briefly mentioned earlier, our present concept of nation-state and hence national collective identity arose following the 18th Century Enlightenment and revolution period in Europe. According to Jacques Derrida, the European Union reflects the Enlightenment ideals based on homogeneous values that produce binary distinctions such as: European/non-European, self/other, essential/contingent, universal/particular, and so on. He argues that European identity should be more open to differences. Hence it should be re-defined.²⁸ Perhaps then, if

²⁵ See, for example: E. Meehan, 'European integration and citizens' rights: a comparative perspective', *Publius*, vol. 26, no. 4, 1996, pp. 91-121; J-M. Ferry, 'L'Etat Européen', in R. Kastoryano (ed.), *Quelle Identité pour l'Europe? Le Multiculturalisme à l'Épreuve*, Paris, Presses de Sciences Po., 1998; A. Wiener, *European Citizenship Practice. Building Institutions of a Non-State*, Oxford, Westview Press, 1998; C. Neveu, 'Citizens of Europe and European Citizens: Exploring European Citizenship', in I. Bellier and T.M. Wilson (eds.) *An Anthropology of the European Union: Building, Imagining and Experiencing the New Europe*, Oxford, Berg, 2000; J. Habermas, *The Postnational Constellation. Political essays*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2001; K. Nicolaidis, and S. Weatherill, 'Whose Europe? National Models and the Constitution of the European Union', *European Studies at Oxford Series*, Oxford University Press, September 2003.

²⁶ S. Duchesne and A-P. Frogner, 'National and European Identifications: A Dual Relationship', *Comparative European Politics*, Vol. 6, (2008), p. 145.

²⁷ G. Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*, London, Macmillan, 1995; M. Sassatelli, Monica, 'Imagined Europe: The Shaping of a European Cultural Identity through EU Cultural Policy', *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (November 2002), 435-451, p. 439.

²⁸ Ivic and Lakicevic, 'European Identity: Between Modernity and Postmodernity', p. 404.

demos formation at the EU level is the answer to the EU's lack of democratic participation possibility, then we need to start from a position of re-Enlightenment. But you can't just make an Enlightenment happen. Enlightenment is more the resulting period of a gradual collective change in social views about both the personal and the political. It is the collective's response to archaic ways of thinking that dominate society by demonstrating social progression through art, protest and social movements. It is using reason over tradition and using that reason to move society forward. And this is what the European Union must do. What is being suggested is that the EU needs to think outside the box; to see its own existence beyond the confines of what is already defined and what can already be conceived of. Only then will it be able to overcome the democratic participation issues caused by its multilingual nature and form an identity both for itself and for its citizens as a collective that does not conflict with their pre-existing national identities. If created in the right way, with a full understanding of the gravity and weight held by the symbols and archetypes that form its content, European identity could be constructed to function alongside national identity. How this can be done is by using the format but **not** the content of national identity formation.

THE OTHER

Before outlining the first step that must be taken in forging a European demos following the format, but not the content of national identity, it is necessary to briefly explain the concept of 'The Other'. The Other, in terms of identity formation, is the established yet contested idea that collective identity can only be formed against the background of a different collective identity that it recognises as being other to the collective. Perhaps the most pertinent and succinct explanation of The Other in identity formation comes from Basia Nikiforova in her article 'Language Policy and Language of Cultural Pluralism'. In it she writes:

Identity is formed and supported through “external” identification, distinguishing ourselves from Others. The Other is represented as something ontologically external and hostile. Therefore, he has to be assimilated or banished. Concern about the Other allows forgetting personal problems and communal conflicts; [The] Other doesn’t exist outside me. He is the only unique way of my self-identification.²⁹

On a collective level therefore, must we firstly have a perceived and defined Other in order to have a comprehensive We? Historically, this is how nations have increased nationalistic sentiment, by contrasting their values and cultural symbols against those of neighbouring nations in order to demonstrate difference and distinction. The suggestion that the Other poses a threat is perhaps the strongest way of affirming fidelity to the home nation. ‘The in-group/out-group antagonism is a latent phenomenon which can be activated under certain circumstances such as the insiders’ perception that outsiders pose a threat to the in-group.’³⁰ This in turn forces the insiders of the ‘we-group’ to react with discrimination against outsiders in order to protect the collective self from perceived or real, substantial or symbolic ‘attacks’ of the obvious others.³¹

A clear marker of difference between ‘us’ and ‘them’ in national terms has been linguistic distinction between nations. The idea of “I belong to the nation of England because I speak English”; “I belong to the nation of France because I speak French” etc. An idea that was reinforced through the introduction of national education systems being standardised in one single dominant national language following the Enlightenment. Although linguistic borders do not realistically work like this, the dominant language of a nation is still one of the strongest symbols of difference between ‘us’ and ‘them’. However, assimilation as the process of evening out “otherness”, adjusting oneself to a dominant cultural-linguistic environment is usually

²⁹ B. Nikiforova, ‘Language policy and language of cultural pluralism’, *Santalka: Filosofija, Komunikacija*, vol. 15, no.1, 2007, pp. 43-44.

³⁰ L. M. McLaren, *Identity, Interests and Attitudes to European Integration*, Palgrave-Macmillan, Houndmills et al., 2006.

³¹ V. Kaina, and I. P. Karolewski, ‘EU Governance and European Identity’, *Living Reviews in European Governance*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2009, p. 15.

accompanied by the weakening of national identity, and this is exactly what many Europeans fear.³² Given the practical linguistic inequality inherent within the institutions of the European Union³³ the very real fear is that further political and cultural unity within the Union will eventually lead to a cultural assimilation led by the culture of the most dominant practical language(s) used within the institutions. And with this, many fear that their national identity will be replaced by a European identity, rather than coexisting alongside it. This can only be overcome forming an equally strong European identity without the pre-condition of a common language.

This all suggests that having a defined Other is a feature of national identity formation that cannot be escaped in any identity formation, even that which exists beyond the nation, such as the European Union. But does this distinction between the self and other necessarily have to come along with discrimination and conflict? Or, more specifically: Do we need the negative associations that come with distinction from an Other in order to fully form an Us? Or, can this difference between Us and Them be outlined in a more positive manner that does not breed discrimination against the Other? Historically, otherness has been physically demarcated through the outlining of national borders, which of course have been put into place through wars, battles and tensions with neighbouring states; 'nation building has been marked by struggle, by people actively seeking recognition for their particular culture, history, language,

³² Nikiforova, 'Language policy and language of cultural pluralism', p. 45.

³³ This statement is referring to the Union prescribed distinctions between *treaty languages*, *official languages*, *working languages* and *languages of the case*. The European Commission formulates the majority of its primary texts in English, a practice which stands in stark contrast to the officially prescribed equality of all official languages. Further to this, its day to day procedural work is carried out in French and English, and to a lesser extent, German, a linguistically biased practice which is passed on to both the Parliament and the Council. The Parliament could also be said to demonstrate a bias towards the English language with regards to its preparatory work in an effort to speed up communication and so as not to burden an already stretched translation and interpretation service. Due to time and budgetary constraints, relatively few working documents are translated into all languages. The European Commission employs English, French and German in general as procedural languages, whereas the European Parliament provides translation into different languages according to the needs of its Members. (See K. Luttermann, 'Cultures in Dialogue. Institutional and Individual Challenges for EU Institutions and EU Citizens from the Perspective of Legal Linguistics', *Journal of Language and Communication Studies*, no. 46, 2011, p. 26. And, S. Glanert, 'Speaking Language to Law: The Case of Europe', *Legal Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2, June 2008, p.161).

and identity'.³⁴ Evidently, this is not the path that the EU would or should take given that the essence of its being was borne from a desire to stop wars between European countries ever happening again. However, that does not mean that the EU cannot follow the format of geographically defining its boundaries without following the hostile manner in which its content took place for nation states. As we know, the EU has undergone numerous expansions over its lifetime, meaning that its borders are continually moving. This has resulted in the consequence that European citizens cannot identify what they are not, as what they currently **are not** may be part of what they **are** in the future. Thus, they do not know the defined extent of their collective on a physical level. There cannot be a Them if we do not know where expansion will end and who We are. That being said, given the multicultural, diverse nature of the European Union, it is vitally important that in forging a European identity we are careful to avoid the xenophobic characteristics that featured in post-Enlightenment national identity formation. Therefore meaning that the EU must ensure that their Us and Them dynamic is neither ethno-central nor religion-centric as is the case with national identity Other distinction. For the EU thus far, each enlargement has brought along with it an increase in nationalistic sentiments, with the citizens of present member states often displaying hostility towards the idea of further enlargement, and what they perceive as the further stretching of resources and funds. A logical starting point would therefore be to simply define the geographical borders of the EU, by stating that no further enlargements will take place, and thus defining a basic level of Otherness that is needed. Defining geographical borders would allow for the process of demos formation to begin and thus the creation of a space of democratic participation that the EU is currently lacking and which linguistic diversity has somewhat limited. Border definition through political debate and general consensus of the citizens already within those borders would be a democratic, peaceful start to defining the boundaries of the EU, at least geographically speaking. As Jurgen Habermas says:

³⁴ Fossum, 'Identity Politics in the European Union', p. 374.

‘Any political community that wants to understand itself as a democracy must at least distinguish between members and non-members.³⁵ Even if geographical aggregation seems arbitrary to some, it is no more arbitrary than many of the other artificial tools nations use to strengthen attachment at collective level. Physical boundaries, once in place, open up the doors from numerous other certainties and definitional possibilities to begin, upon which a solidly defined European identity can begin to be formed.³⁶

Whilst maintaining that the traditional, post-Enlightenment structure of nation-state building and thus national identity formation is not the path that the EU should be following, it would be remiss not to accept that there is a place in European identity formation for Otherness. The external validation of a Them seems to be a necessary component for Us, the in-group, to feel attachment to each other as well as to the European Union itself. It is the content of the internal archetypes that we should be dismissing, not the external validation.

CONSCIOUS DEMARCATION AND SUBCONSCIOUS ATTACHMENT

This initial stage of setting geographical borders could be described as being the “*conscious stage*” of European identity construction. The clear and overt carving of a physical space and the duties and powers of the EU within that space. Identity is a process which is formed through the artificial construction of symbols and archetypes, which then over time subconsciously form part of the collective self. Some may argue that geographical definition of the peoples of Europe is an arbitrary attempt to unite peoples who happen to be situated within a certain geographical region. True as this may be what geographical definition allows for is much more than that; it is

³⁵ J. Habermas, *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays*, John Wiley & Sons, 2015, p. 107.

³⁶ On Europe's protected geopolitical position, see introduction, C. Tilly, ed., *The formation of national states*, Princeton University Press, 1975; for Europe's problematic eastern boundaries, see R. Pearson, *National minorities in Eastern Europe, 1848-1945*, London, Macmillan, 1983; and Roger Portal, *The Slavs*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969.

the beginning of a process which can be consciously generated in the first instance, but has the aim of forming a subconscious sentiment of loyalty and attachment within those its construction is formed around; something that takes process rather than production.

Much like identity itself, the European Union is often referred to as a process and not a product. European identity formation goes hand-in-hand with the European Union defining its own identity. Starting from scratch and beginning with the *conscious stage* of identity construction would be the EU carving its position as a state-like entity. Defining a physical, geographical space for rights, duties and competences and outlining what those are. 'Common legal rights and duties for all members is not what one should expect from a cultural community, such as the nation. Rather, this is a function of the state, the political institution that regulates the lives of people within its territory'.³⁷ The *sub-conscious stage* of identity formation would then follow this conscious demarcation to allow for the more sentimental attachment that we would usually associate with the nation. But how would this take place?

What the EU wants to grow is a unique collective attachment that is equally as strong as national identity but does not conflict. Looking at the strength of national-identity bonds, Montserrat Guibernau writes:

Sharing a national identity generates an emotional bond among fellow nationals, which, as Connor puts it, is fundamentally psychological and non-rational. It is not irrational, only 'beyond reason' (Connor 1994b). This is so because, basically, a nation is a group of people who feel that they are ancestrally related. In Connor's view, the nation 'is the largest group that can command a person's loyalty because of felt kinship ties; it is, from this perspective, the fully extended family'. However, 'the sense of unique descent, need not, and in nearly all cases will not, accord with factual history' (Connor 1994b: 202) since nearly all nations originate from the mixing of peoples from various ethnic origins. For this reason, what matters is not chronological or factual history but sentient or felt history.³⁸

³⁷ M. Guibernau, 'Anthony D. Smith on nations and national identity: a critical assessment', *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 10, Issue 1-2 (January 2004), 125–141, p. 128.

³⁸ *Ibid.* p. 135.

The hope would be that once the consciously constructed aspects of European identity formation are in place, the subconscious aspects that create the emotional bond and forge loyalty to the institution could take hold. As Guibernau notes, when it comes to national identity these emotional bonds are irrational, not built on historical fact and are beyond reason. ‘The strength of emotions overrides reason, because it is through a sentimental identification with the nation that individuals transcend their finite and, at least for some, meaningless lives’.³⁹ This can only be a positive thing for the European Union as what it needs to emulate (yet subvert) in form is an artificial feeling. Meaning that it could create the basis of the necessary sentiment, rather than having to overcome and form something that is very real.

RE-ENLIGHTENED IDENTITY: THE BATTLE BETWEEN PAST AND FUTURE⁴⁰

The next stage for the European Union, the “*subconscious stage*” shall we call it, is to make the collective feel something that isn’t necessarily real in a tangible or even intangible sense. Guibernau’s quote above, as well as discussion earlier about the nature of national identity, reveals the important aspect of a shared history and an imagined idea of ancestral relatedness. This past, this historical belonging of togetherness could be said to be the link between all of the other symbols and archetypes of national identity. The shared myths and stories are a way of remembering (or creating) the past that creates the sense of being united, these stories are

³⁹ Ibid. pp. 135-136.

⁴⁰ Although not the same as my suggested solution in content, the idea that a European collective identity is entrenched in the Europeans’ consciousness of sharing a common fate has been advocated by such academics as Offe, Kielmansegg, Horeth and Maurer, all of whom suggest that forging a European identity around this idea of a common fate may reinforce the mutual willingness to work together by pursuing common goals and solving collective problems that go beyond the capacities of single nation-states. See, K. Offe, ‘Demokratie und Wohlfahrtsstaat: Eine europäische Regimeform unter dem Streß der europäischen Integration’, *Swiss Political Science Review*, vol. 4, no. 4, 1998, pp. 35-56; A. Maurer, ‘Nationale Parlamente in der Europäischen Union—Herausforderungen für den Konvent’, *Integration*, vol. 25, no. 1, 2002, pp. 20-34; P. G. Kielmansegg, ‘Integration und demokratie’, *Europäische Integration*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 1996, pp. 47-71; M. Horeth, ‘No way out for the beast? The unsolved legitimacy problem of European Governance’, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 1999, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 249–268.

shared in the common language, a language which is shaped by and shapes the past experiences of that collective. Europe, in contrast 'is deficient both as idea and as process. Above all, it lacks a pre-modern past-a 'prehistory ' which can provide it with emotional sustenance and historical depth'.⁴¹ Perhaps then, in continuing with the idea of following the format of national-identity formation but not the content, and in attempting to discover something which could overcome the strength of unity forged by a common language and shared history, we should instead look to the future rather than the past. We should not be looking to make the EU collective feel ancestrally related as this would again create the conflict scenario that is posing problems today. What the EU should instead focus on is an ideological relatedness in a future sense, a vision of ideals that we are working towards as a collective rather than looking backwards as national identity does. Instead of relying on sentiment for a past connection, we could create a yearning for a future one. In this way the identity is being consciously constructed but also allows for natural growth to strengthen bonds between the various peoples of the EU. This would also fit well with the idea of European identity being a process and the need for Otherness to contrast itself against. The xenophobic past of the nation-state could be contrasted with the diverse, cosmopolitan, racially and religiously inclusive future of the EU. According to Inglehart:

Identification with Europe will take place in a more abstract way than it did with formerly with nations. This would constitute a further level in the development of cosmopolitan attitudes, in such a way that post-materialist concerns – freedom, quality of life, human values, as opposed to materialist concerns like consumer goods and physical security – would become more important for Europeans than they were for members of national states.⁴²

Contrasting the past-focused myths and materialist concerns of national identity with future-focused, post-materialist ideals of European identity may well be the step needed to stop one conflicting with the other. As Anthony D. Smith writes, 'The revival of ethnic myths, memories and traditions, both within and outside a globalizing but eclectic culture, reminds us of the

⁴¹ Smith, 'National Identity and the Idea of European Unity', p. 62.

⁴² Duchesne, 'Waiting for a European Identity...Reflections on the Process of Identification with Europe', p. 404.

fundamentally memoryless nature of any cosmopolitan culture created today'.⁴³ He also points out the 'time-bound' nature of existing cultures, highlighting the fact that they are 'tied to specific peoples, places and periods' and are 'bound up with definite historical identities'.⁴⁴ All of these features of national identity conflict with the cosmopolitan nature not only of the European Union, but also modern existence at the national level. The issue with Smith's evaluation of cosmopolitan demos creation is that he fails to see beyond the past. He writes:

Here lies the new Europe's true dilemma: a choice between unacceptable historical myths and memories on the one hand, and on the other a patchwork, memoryless scientific 'culture' held together solely by the political will and economic interest that are so often subject to change. In between, there lies the hope of discovering that 'family of cultures' briefly outlined above, through which over several generations some loose, over-arching political identity and community might gradually be forged.⁴⁵

Smith does not consider the artificial nature of historical myths, symbols and ancestry and in doing so is unable to see the potential for artificial cosmopolitan demos creation at the European level. Smith is correct in his assertion that we must work with materials destined for the very projects which [the European Union] seeks to supersede⁴⁶, yet this should not be seen as a problem at the EU level. As has been stated many times earlier in this paper, working with these materials should not involve copying their content as this creates identity conflict. European demos formation 'should not be built on the Enlightenment's universalist assumptions nor on the metaphysical understanding of a cultural and historical heritage'⁴⁷ as 'stories telling a shared past constitute boundaries with high emotional value'⁴⁸. Instead, having a sense of collective based on an artificial past and artificial myths should be contrasted with having a future sense of self based on artificially created future ideals such as rights and genuine cosmopolitanism that can be worked towards. In other words, the European Union should create a concept or a vision

⁴³ Smith, 'National Identity and the Idea of European Unity', p. 66.

⁴⁴ Ibid. p. 66.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p.74.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 67.

⁴⁷ Ivic and Lakicevic, 'European Identity: Between Modernity and Postmodernity', p. 404.

⁴⁸ Eder, 'A Theory of Collective Identity: Making sense of the Debate on a 'European Identity'', p. 433.

of what our people will be if we work and unify together, and rights could play a large part in this. 'The proposal is to look not at political or cultural symbols but at stories that emerge in the making of a network of social relations among those living in Europe. [...] A story based on a successful process of unification, [...] the story of the making of a rich, yet socially responsible continent, the story of an economic yet social Europe.'⁴⁹ This is exactly the way in which the European Union should be thinking when it comes to demos creation at the European level. Prospective stories of future ideals to work towards which incorporate the element of process that is necessary in solidifying collective identity at such a level. Just as the stories of the past are artificial yet believed in a very real sense at the collective level, the future stories of Us can be a dream that we can work towards – a future sense of togetherness which, in attempting to achieve, unites and solidifies the European collective.

RE-ENLIGHTENED IDENTITY: LABEL MANIPULATION

Thus far, the above suggestions for a re-Enlightened European demos have focused on the identity of the collective itself and how the process of collective identity formation should begin to take place. However, there is one final aspect that is of vital importance for demos creation at this level which, rather than being at the collective level, must be defined at the institutional level. As was briefly noted earlier, the EU has an identity crisis of its own, in the sense of lacking an understood terminological definition. We continuously switch between referring to it as either a 'post-national' or 'supra-national' state or entity. There are 2 main problems with this: firstly, given the EU's unique nature there is no definite, comprehensive term which describes its state of being; and secondly, both terms currently used make reference to the nation in their name. If we look back at the idea of the European Union when it was first conceived, 'Monnet's

⁴⁹ Ibid. p. 433.

vision was of a federation of member states, with a substantial component of supranationality modeled on the nation state, the United States of Europe', whereas Jacques Delors referred to it as an "*objet politique non identifié*".⁵⁰ Such terminology as "federalism" or "federation" has always been shied away from when it comes to the writing of the treaties as 'the word "federation" seems to repel most of the member states. [...] [and] all European political leaders try never to name or define the European political system as it is constructed'.⁵¹ Neither the terminology used by Monnet nor that of Delors is helpful. The former increases hostile nationalist sentiment and is seen as a threat to sovereignty, whereas the second wilfully ignores the need for a defined certainty in a democratic entity. What is more, Delors' choice to term it in such a vague, ambiguous manner in fact harms the EU as such a lack of certain self-determination by the EU impedes identity formation, identification processes and even integration at the level of the citizen. How could any of these processes begin without certainty about the larger institution that they are identifying with?

Just because the European Union is unique in every sense of its being, that does not mean that it should have remained ill-defined for all of this time. By thus far only ill-defining its nature and its name in terms of the nation (by referring to itself as a post or supra nation) the EU has pitted itself against the strength of attachment felt towards the nation. Much as with the arguments used earlier in relation to the archetypes copied in an attempted to forge a European identity, the EU has yet again made the error of defining itself in terms of the nation. By consciously constructing its name in a way that does not refer to the nation, there is the possibility of manipulating or altering people's perceptions about what the EU is and what it is trying to become. If this were the world of advertising it would be a case of renaming and rebranding a

⁵⁰ Abéles, 'Identity and Borders: An Anthropological Approach to EU Institutions', p. 5.

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 5.

product following bad publicity in order to trick the consumer into believing the content of the product itself was also different.

How, then, would we define the European Union? Beginning with the post/supra options, etymologically speaking 'supra' has connotations of superiority, which some might find adverse to the pursuit of European identity existing alongside national ones. 'Post' on the other hand does not generate the same potentially negative connotations. Rather, given that it evokes the idea of coming 'after' something else, we could quite literally chronologically justify 'post' being used in the EU's definition since the EU did indeed emerge after other types of united entities that collectives had been attached to. Next, we must find something which encompasses the discussed notions of European demos creation and definition, beginning from a re-Enlightened position as well as the future-centred identity process that was proposed. Given the nature of the argument that our sense of being as a collective could come from a constructed future yearning for something better that we can work towards rather than an artificial shared past, the word "ideology" springs to mind. The Oxford Dictionary offers the following definitions for the word:

1. A system of ideas and ideals, especially one which forms the basis of economic or political theory and policy;
2. The set of beliefs characteristic of a social group or individual;
3. Visionary speculation, especially of an unrealistic or idealistic nature.⁵²

These definitions combined cover the sense that is intended; the aim of moving towards united political, economic, and social beliefs, theory and policy through an idealistic shared collective vision.

⁵² "ideology", The Oxford English Dictionary online, 2016, <<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/ideology>>, accessed 15 January 2016.

With all of these elements in mind, I would suggest that terming the European Union as a ***post-ideologue juris civitas*** encompasses the European Union as an establishment but also as a community of citizens, that those citizens can then go on to identify with. The given name defines the EU as a political and economic Union but also offers a means of the citizen identifying with it by evoking ideologies of a rights-based community; all without referencing the nation and thus avoiding conflict in definition. What is more, each word of the given name etymologically is derived from either Latin or Greek, meaning that the numerous linguistic families that exist within the European Union would be able to identify with the words themselves given the etymology of the language families within Europe that existing European identities are formed around.

CONCLUSION

Beyond the idealistic vision it is also important to include a more solid idea of what this ideology would contain when defining the EU. Naming the European Union in a manner which evokes the legally enshrined nature of collective rights would also conjure ideas of social justice which could solidify the peoples' sense of collective communication possibility with the establishment. By defining the EU in terms of rights a belief in communication possibilities would be aroused. This is because the people of Europe do not necessarily need to practically use or speak the same language in order to feel able to democratically participate. By creating a true, solidly defined European identity that takes hold of the peoples' subconscious sentiment so that they feel like a collective, democratic participation would be believed in. If people feel like they belong, then they feel able to participate and like their voice is heard. Thus in forging a demos, the problems of unequal democratic participation caused by multilingualism can be overcome.

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