

## **European Cosmopolitan Solidarity: Questions of Citizenship, Difference and Post-Materialism**

There is an interesting paradox evident in the current debates about the future prospects of European citizenship. On the one hand, there is the sense of Europe's historic mission to protect the values of democracy, pluralism and participation and develop new institutional structures that are adequate for an age that is increasingly defined by globalisation. The subsequent need to develop a European public sphere and civil society to match the changes in the way in which we do politics has been commented on by a number of critics. Yet, on the other hand, there is also the fear that these values at more grass roots levels are in terminal decline. Many are increasingly concerned that in societies dominated by consumerism and mediated politics that simply developing new tiers of government is unlikely to arrest the erosion of citizenship. This paradox is sharpened by the fact that the 'war on terrorism' is constantly reminding us of the need to defend the values of democracy against fundamentalists who hold them in contempt. The question we are being asked to resolve is how we might redefine a European public sphere in more global times and yet strengthen the connection of citizens to more normative political values. These issues have become central to the struggle for a cosmopolitan Europe. For many it has been European social democracy's ability to defend social standards of welfare and communal life that is at the forefront of the struggle against neoliberalism. For example, Jeremy Rifkin (2004) has argued in this respect that the future is European rather than American. On a number of quality of life questions such as health, education and the environment the countries of the European Union exceed their American counterparts. If the challenge of the future is the ability to construct safe, healthy and sustainable environments then it is Europe rather than America that is currently leading the way.

Despite the continuation and reinvention of social democracy there have been a number of voices recently that have argued that European social achievements are currently under threat. The decline of the manual working-class, trade unions and old style social democracy has meant that the welfare state has become progressively identified with the poor rather than the universal rights of citizenship. In the United States as well as Europe, politics has become progressively dominated by the concerns of capital rather than labour. However given the historic weakness of the labour movement in the American context it has been European societies that have been most overly

transformed in a post-democratic direction. Indeed it currently questionable as to whether the decline of the social democratic Left can be reversed. The collapse of the labour movement within Europe calls into question the possibility of a better society based upon collectivist principles. If the history of twentieth century Europe was defined by a struggle between capitalism and socialism then such oppositions are unlikely to mark to the twenty-first century. The rapid disintegration of the Left has led to a rapid increase in inequality and the dominance of neoliberal forms of globalisation (Jacques 2004). But if the old style socialist Left are in decline, many of their concerns in respect of seeking alternatives beyond a world dominated by capitalism remain as central as ever. Here we need to remind ourselves that old style national social democracy has been placed under increasing threat by globalising pressures and that there is no return to the 'good old days' of the 1950s and 1960s. This does not of course mean that the state - as many have claimed - is impotent; but it does mean that the state is continually being de-centered by the global flows of money, culture and politics. In certain respects, a cosmopolitan argument pushes the view that our political and cultural sensibilities lag behind the dramatic shift that has taken place in the economy. The arrival of the virtual economy, twenty-four hour money markets and capital's enhanced ability to exit local financial markets has diminished the power of states in relation to the movements of capital. For example, the ratio of foreign-exchange turnover of world trade climbed from 10:1 in the early 1980s to 60:1 by the late 1990s (Goldblatt, Held, McGrew and Perraton 1997). These features suggest the need to create a new politics beyond the nation. The argument here is that questions of politics and citizenship need to find more post-national forms of expression. Despite some commentators arguing for the construction of a global polity this seems unrealistically utopian in a world that is still quaking in the wake of September 11<sup>th</sup>. Here we might want to retain a double vision of the United States as both a democratic republic and both barbaric and violent operating in a zone of global conflict (Buck-Morss 2003). However the more the United States seeks to impose 'freedom' the closer it comes to recreating totalitarianism. We would do well to remember that the moral grammar of European totalitarianism depended upon clear distinctions between a virtuous in-group and an out-group who had to be destroyed (Todorov 2003). In this respect, the creation of a European space built upon law and social solidarity has an added global significance (Leonard 2005). It is then the development of post-national forms of citizenship at the European level that I wish to explore. However I am aware that Europe needs to become a project that goes beyond the defence of liberal freedoms. As Ulrich Beck (2000: 158) argues 'only in the transnational space of Europe can the politics of individual countries change from a threatened object to a shape-giving subject of globalization'. In this article however I want to stress that we need to be careful to ensure that such a project avoids the racialised language of civilisational difference (Huntington 1997). It has become a much remarked upon feature of contemporary European politics that the need to

defend 'our' welfare state often becomes entangled in racialised languages of hostility in respect of immigrants and asylum seekers. The post-September 11<sup>th</sup> world has seen the enhanced fostering of right-wing political parties that have traded upon the codes of nationalism and patriotism in order to promote a Europe of racial purity and exclusivity (Gilroy 2004). Here I seek to explore the possibility of new European cultures of solidarity that might be built through the recognition of difference rather than its denial.

### **European Cosmopolitan Solidarity: An Identity Under Construction?**

Before continuing with this argument we need to explore whether a European cosmopolitanism can offer an alternative radical politics to that of neoliberalism? The cosmopolitan argument in response to the pressures of global markets is global responsibility. Only through the renegotiation of our global interdependencies can we hope to institute a world based upon social justice, democracy and respect for the 'Other'. This suggests a different politics from what Zygmunt Bauman (2004:137) has called 'local entrenchment'. In other words, the turn to local identities simply exits the stage to allow for the dominance of global forces. A cosmopolitan view rejects attempts to find purely local solutions to global problems and requires the reinvention of civic solidarity beyond the nation-state. For many, it is the survival of the European 'social state' that protected the citizen against the uncertainty of the market that is at issue.

Pierre Bourdieu (2001, 2003) has called for a European social movement to defend civilised values (the rights to an education, health, culture and work) against the power of the market. As a result dominant politics of the nation-state across Europe, being the social state has withered away, to be gradually replaced by the market and the consumer. Neoliberal politics has contributed to both massive social inequalities and to the demoralisation and cynicism on the part of ordinary citizens. More specifically Bourdieu (2003:29) argues that neoliberalism has introduced:

'A mode of production that entails a mode of domination based on the institution of insecurity, domination through precariousness: a deregulated financial market fosters a deregulated labour market and thereby the casualisation of labour that cows workers into submission'.

In this respect, modern capitalism has progressively undermined the practice of democratic citizenship. In our economic lives the market has instituted a dual labour market of overworked and stressed professionals and low status and unskilled jobs with few career prospects. While they are both subject to neoliberal pressures of downsizing, increasing insecurity and market uncertainty, this division institutes a cultural divide between global citizens who are international, polygot and polycultural and the locals who are more likely to take refuge in nationalism and parochialism.

The aim of a European social movement would be to ‘restore politics’ (Bourdieu 2003:38). Such a social movement would need to build upon many of the concrete objectives of a multitude of social movements in areas such as housing, employment, health and the environment. For Bourdieu, central to these movements are a shared sense of civic activism and a rejection of the regressive politics of neoliberalism. In this respect, most of the campaigns are organised internationally linking together different social and cultural struggles. Many of these social movements, unlike mainstream political parties, do not depend upon having definite leaders and have emerged out of a libertarian tradition. The reason that Europe becomes central to these arguments is two fold. Firstly the existence of a European polity at a trans-national level converts cosmopolitanism into a possibility. The explicit focus of a European social movement would be to argue that Europe must be more than a central bank, bureaucracy and single currency. The democratic aim would be to replace the European Commission with a genuine executive responsible to an elected parliament. Secondly the dominance of European trade amongst fellow Europeans helps destroy some of the myths of the global economy. Bourdieu (2001:36) reports that ‘70 per cent of the trade with European countries are with other European countries’. This is both a threat as well as an opportunity. Here the concern is over nations who attempt to gain a competitive advantage by driving down social welfare and wage costs. Alternatively a European social movement should aim to work towards the creation of a European social state. This would seek to enhance rather than downgrade the accomplishments of nation-states in areas such as education, welfare and health. Such a utopian demand could only be possible in a social movement that was capable of standing up to the regressive forces of nationalism and financial markets. Notably while this movement would have to be created out of a variety of social movements, Bourdieu (2003: 57) argues that it is ‘trade unionism, which could be the engine of a social Europe’. Despite the declining role of trade unions and the general defeat of the labour movement, Bourdieu argues for their mutual revitalisation. For example, one of the many positive roles a revived trade unionism could play would be the unionisation of immigrants in the unofficial economy. This would provide them with new hope and purpose in a Europe that grants immigrant workers few rights and little social protection.

Bourdieu’s argument is that meaningful citizenship, stable employment and welfare all depend upon the invention of a European civil society. However I remain unconvinced that such a politics could reconnect the tripod of the engaged citizen, full-time work and the welfare state. Here my argument is that Bourdieu is correct that a European social movement is required to civilise the policies of the market, but I do not think it is possible to return to a politics of full employment and a strong labour movement, however desirable this might seem. The challenge now is how democratic participation becomes possible ‘after full employment’. Here a post-national Europe requires not so much the right to work as a form of politics where ‘work’ loses its centrality. In the

European context, claims to citizenship are underwritten less by a reformulated 'workerism' than a new politics of solidarity and difference. This said, Bourdieu is correct to point to the connection between economic uncertainties and the decline or erosion of citizenship more generally. Etienne Balibar (2002) has similarly argued for a European citizenship that includes all the communities that are historically present on European territory. In particular he seeks to connect the expansion of the market and uncertainty into the cultures of everyday life and the intensification of populist racism. There is then no European country that can claim to have been immune to popular ideas that have consistently linked the arrival of 'foreigners' and increased competition over jobs and the decline of shared living standards. However in ultra-nationalist rhetoric it is notable that this is not just a rejection of the non-European but also the rejection of other Europeans. While it is the Arab, the black and the Muslim who are the consistent focus of popular racism, such features are also increasingly accompanied by an intensification of anti-European sentiment. This is particularly evident in the context of the enlargement of the European Union promoting the mobility of labour from the former Eastern Europe. Similarly with Bourdieu, Balibar calls for the development of a new European social movement that works across national boundaries such a movement would need to mutually address the right to difference as well as measures which sought to correct the global economy. However neither Bourdieu's nor Balibar's arguments adequately address some of the undoubted problems that a post-national social movement would have to address. In this context I want to look at some of the contemporary cultural transformations in respect of individualisation.

### **Civil Society and Individualisation**

Here the argument is that European civil society is not so much being colonised as it is being individualised. In this respect, I want to suggest that we need to view the individualisation of European modernity as an ambivalent social and cultural creation. Individualisation means the disembedding of the ways of industrial society and the reinvention of new communal ties and biographies. For sociologist Ulrich Beck (1992) as more areas of social life become less defined by tradition the more our biographies require choice and planning. We are living in the age of DIY biographies. Under the conditions of welfare industrialism 'people are invited to constitute themselves as individuals: to plan, understand, design themselves as individuals and, should they fail, to blame themselves' (Beck 1999). Individuals are 'condemned' to become authors of their own lives. The disintegration of the nuclear family and rigid class hierarchies means we are all released from the structures of industrial society into the uncertainties of a globalised society. Such a dynamic means that we often look for politics in the wrong place. In this respect, the key antagonism within 'reflexive' modernity lies between a politics that builds upon individualised

forms of reflexivity and the re-inscription of fundamentalist certitude. Such a politics asks us to think about widespread assumptions in respect of the colonisation of economic reason, the decline of values or post-modern forms of fragmentation. Modernity has given birth to both 'freedom's children' who have learnt that fun, mobile phones and opposition to mainstream politics can be a force for change, and ugly citizens and moralisers who seek to reaffirm modernity's perceived loss of security (Beck 1998). The main political dividing line in the struggles that mark the future will be between those who seek to remake civil society and community out of freedom and those who seek to introduce new forms of discipline and compulsion. According to Beck, it is the ethic of individualisation when joined with globalisation that is most likely to lead politics in a cosmopolitan direction. The decline of national industrialism is increasingly giving rise to a global cosmopolitan ethic that realises that the key problems raised by common citizenship can no longer be thought about and experienced in national terms (Beck 1999).

Individualisation, as we saw above, also has potentially negative consequences. While such processes open the citizen to new ties and forms of attachment it also fragments older forms of community. For example, Richard Sennett (1998) has argued that global capital has promoted an uncertain culture based upon short-term contracts, insecurity, risk and superficial communal relations. The self fostered by neoliberalism is both open to the culture of the market, while fostering a pervasive sense of insecurity and a longing for community. If a citizenship based upon cosmopolitan forms of solidarity is to take hold it must be able to build community out of individualisation. If network capitalism fosters a world of atomised competitive advantage, citizenship needs to be able to offer the prospect of social solidarity with others who are sometimes different from us. Whereas uncertainty and insecurity are good for the market they are bad for citizenship. The development of a reactivated citizenship and cosmopolitan institutions is not only good for politics it is essential for democratic participation. The culture of market individualism rewards material success and punishes personal failure thereby requiring that we learn to balance a respect of difference with the rediscovery of the art of the common good (Bellah 1996). As the market spreads into different areas of social life citizenship arguably becomes increasingly defined through different kinds of social conduct. The market's view of the citizen is through the individualised ability to be able to 'maximise his or her lifestyle through acts of choice' (Rose 2000: 99). The market, under the guise of freedom and autonomy, acts as a mechanism regulating norms and instilling certain forms of behavior. In terms of the politics of welfare the aim is less the tackling of inequality and more 'to help individuals themselves to provide for their social needs' (Hall 2003: 18). The ambiguities of individualisation make the return of old style labour politics through progressive forms of unionisation highly unlikely. In this context it is the constant renegotiation of identity and the multiplication of the self that has become the central feature of

everyday life (Melucci 1996). This has created new structural inequalities between those who are able to work on the self and those who are denied the necessary economic and cultural resources. For the 'fortunate' the individualised society is not static but potentially overloaded with choice and anxiety. Others have argued that the subject that becomes instituted through an increasing reflexivity in respect of the body is less the rational, free choosing citizen but the neurotic citizen (Isin 2004). Here citizens engage in new courses of action not only to minimise risk, but also to handle anxiety and fear. Neurotic citizens therefore no longer believe in the virtues of radical politics, but nervously engage in a number of practices to quell anxiety. The neurotic citizen is less concerned with new collective arrangements in the culture of living than they are in individualised attempts to control the body, ensure their security and privatised notions of wealth and happiness. Currently the neurotic citizen is much more likely to turn to either authoritarian solutions offered by the Right or the market for solutions to their problems than the Left. This is the terrain upon which the struggle for cosmopolitan solidarity must struggle. We should however resist the argument that we either have a world of neurotic citizens or European peoples who have learnt to stand together against the features that would undermine the social state. What is required are new cultural narratives of Europeaness that are able to compete with nationalist and largely neoliberal frameworks that can help citizens invest their practices and identities with meaning. A new kind of politics is required that is centrally concerned with the making of more convivial forms of life. Here following Ernst Bloc (1988) I have constructed a deliberately utopian political project that both anticipates a different kind of Europe to the one that currently exists and has existed in the past. As we shall see such a view aims to steer a middle path between a bad utopianism that simply engages in absolute fancy and a political realism that has become disconnected from a politics of hope.

### **A European Post-Work Future**

The original aim of critical theory was to find a way of connecting the subjective experiences of everyday life to a future more emancipated society. However, as is well known, Habermas (1985) has sought to break with previous generations of critical theory as it both overstated the extent to which modernity had been colonised by instrumental reason and neglected the role of law and morality. Such has been the power of this critique that most recent writing in critical theory is more likely to be engaged with the scope of public reason than questions related to the culture industry, aesthetics or libidinous sexuality which concerned previous generations of critical theory. Here the triumph of the democratic argument has meant that critical theory has had more to say about the development of cosmopolitan forms of governance than it has on more immediate features of everyday life. My argument is that in the European context it urgently needs to recover such a

vocabulary. There is indeed the grim danger that critical theory could end up as a discourse that only connects with the aspirations of democratic elites. Colin Crouch (2004) has warned that European politics is increasingly driven by the needs of business elites rather than the engagements of ordinary people. Here Europeans are inching towards a post-democracy where elections become empty spectacles increasingly shaped by the needs of capital. In these terms the European project should break with a cosmopolitan identity that only involves a horizontal dialogue between political elites. The task for a European Left becomes the recovery of an ethical vision that potentially fosters a form of solidarity between cosmopolitans and locals, rather than enhancing their polarisation. There are of course a number of problems such a European social movement would do well to avoid. Firstly after the criticisms made by Foucault (1977) there is the fear of offering a substantive version of the good life should it become exclusive and orientated around certain ways of life rather than others. Here the fear is that normative critique will become normalising. Terry Eagleton (2004) has recently argued that such views mistakenly represent norms as being only restrictive. Here Habermas's main charge against different versions of post-structuralism and post-modernism is that they fail to recognise the impossibility and indeed undesirability of ditching normative thinking altogether (Fraser 1994). In seeking to evade charges of normalisation Habermas's radical model of the public sphere has sought to be agnostic in terms of the specific debates and formulations that are introduced for democratic discussion. These arguments are important and yet they need to formulate more specific concrete alternatives that link everyday concerns, normative agendas and the globalised structures of modern societies.

Here my argument is that an alternative vision of Europe should seek to build a politics that makes convivial social relations more rather than less likely. We have already seen how economically insecure and overworked Europeans are increasingly turning to nationalism and chauvinism in order to vent their frustrations. A more convivial Europe on the other hand would need to find a link between an ecologically sensitive post-materialist politics and a cultural politics that sought to deconstruct the imperial mentalities that continue to linger in the cultural sphere. Such a politics would need to address head on the manufacture of new anxieties that link the politics of deindustrialisation and the politics of race. In other words, the only cosmopolitan solidarity worth having would have to both develop a correcting logic towards the creation of economic uncertainty and foster a culture of solidarity with the Other. In this understanding Europe would need to engage with a politics beyond the nation that decisively broke with a Europe of neoliberalism or a fortress Europe. Such a view of Europe would need to dispense with notions of citizenship that sought to preserve a common civilisational cultural space (Marfleet 1999). Here Europeans would no longer seek to gain a common identity from market cultures of atomised competition or racial exclusion. Such a view of post-national citizenship would seek to develop a more convivial Europe. By this I



mean the development of shared and overlapping cultures that took pleasure in engaging with the Other. Such a shared culture would need to foster the conditions for a public culture that was more concerned to facilitate dialogue, mutual curiosity and communal relationships than privatised pleasures. This would mean simultaneously breaking with market-defined notions of the good life while constructing post-national solidarity through difference.

In terms of contemporary critical theory it has been Andre Gorz (1994) who has most consistently argued that human flourishing is not well served by the increasing dominance of the market over the spheres of everyday life. In this sense, socialism needs to be redefined as ‘the emancipation of individuals in fields where the logic of the market, competition and profit functions to prevent individuals from achieving autonomy and fulfillment’ (Gorz 1994: 39). In the context of the failure of ‘actually existed’ Left politics within Europe the argument here is to abandon old style socialism and redefine it in terms of the material and cultural conditions evident within modern post-industrial society. The aim of socialising the means of production and enhancing the autonomy of skilled craft workers in the work place suggests a nostalgic rather than critical politics. Such a version of citizenship does not aim to develop a new social system, but to place limits on the capacity of economic reason to colonise the life-world. However such features would also need to develop in tandem with Habermas’s (1991) concerns to develop a democratic socialism appropriate for higher levels of social and cultural complexity. Social solidarity can only emerge through a legally protected democratic polity and the collective mobilisation of a diversity of public spheres. However, as I have indicated, such proposals are neither culturally nor materially specific enough. As Raymond Williams (1961) well understood, society’s capacity to be able to learn through democratic discussion is actually dependent upon the ability to set social and cultural limits on the expression of economic reason and the complex development of social and cultural institutions and ways of life. However as I have indicated if these principles are to gain a footing in a European and a global setting then we need to be clear that there is no return to the old style labour movement.

Gorz’s redefinition of socialism is more concerned with the expansion of autonomy than systems building; this means that such features connect with some of the more positive features of individualisation. In Gorz’s terms the key antagonism within modernity lies between issues related to self-realisation and autonomy as opposed to the maximization of production and consumption. These features neatly dovetail Beck’s (1999) argument that individualisation potentially leads to the enhanced questioning that more and bigger necessarily means better. As is well known, Gorz (1989,1991) has consistently argued over a number of publications that human liberation can only proceed through the re-distribution of work and the reduction of working time. Such features would allow more time for the development of autonomous activities outside of paid employment and the establishment of communicative, sporting, artistic and community building activities and spaces

free from the pressures of economic reason. The changes taking place in the modern labour market has seen the expansion of part-time work, increasing insecurity and complaints of overwork and stress, meaning that work can no longer be the place where citizens 'discover' their central identity. The inability of our society to consider the importance of free time means that for those in full-time work their lives are increasingly dominated by instrumental efficiency criteria and lack of time. Alternatively those excluded from the labour market often lack the material resources to make meaningful choices. Gorz is arguing that human solidarity and autonomy is dependent upon a life that has not become subordinate to the long hours and competitive individualism required by the modern work place, and enjoys enough free time in a context that is not starved of material resources to make it meaningful.

More recently, Gorz (1999) has argued that as citizens free themselves from the domination of full-time work and capital they become able to fore fill themselves through a range of other activities. Either work is integrated into a multi-active life or multi-activity has to become subordinate to the demands of work. For citizens autonomy is strengthened when they are free from the disciplines imposed upon them by holding down a full-time job. The multi-activity based society would allow the priorities of culture (different kinds of self-realisation involved in sport, education, voluntary work, child care) to take priority over the work-based society. These aspirations only become possible in a society that has both redistributed work and guaranteed a basic income for all. This would allow citizens to both reject poor working conditions and enhance their control over their lives. Here Gorz continues to argue against some of his critics that a basic income should not be dependent upon the duty to undertake voluntary work. The ultimate goal of diminishing the role of economic reason in everyday life is to enhance the role of autonomous activities free from the dominance of capital. Zygmunt Bauman (1999) has argued that basic income is best defended on republican grounds rather than the benefits it may or may not have for the poor. Here the argument is that a basic income institutes the principle of sharing amongst citizens rather than neoliberal forms of competition. The political benefit of such a policy is that it offers the possibility of the consumer oriented life becoming one life-style option amongst many. The main deterrent to republican forms of involvement can be found in the uncertainty of the labour market and the hegemony of consumerism over other ethical choices. Such arguments have a 'family resemblance' with many feminist arguments that seek to redefine citizenship by finding space for human qualities such as nurturance and care that have been excluded by a narrow masculine individualism (Werbner 1999). Defining the public in more inclusive terms allows for a variety of human engagements beyond the requirements of competitive individualism. Further, the decoupling of income and work and enhancing the prospect of uncommodified free time also increases the possibility of creating a sustainable future (Sachs 2001).

Indeed, it is currently noticeable that similar ideas are gathering apace both inside and outside of mainstream political circles. There is not a week that goes by in the public sphere without talk about the need to achieve greater work/life balance. The Guardian newspaper journalist Madeline Bunting's (2004) book on overwork is deeply critical of a British society that is currently maintaining an opt-out from the EU's working time regulations. She argues for a society where working hours are reduced and people are better equipped to balance employment and caring. Indeed Gorz's argument is that long hours and the systemic requirement for optimum performance increases the pressure to buy time from others. For Gorz this creates a new class of servants who are bought to do work the economically privileged find boring or beneath them. There is then a growing concern about the effects of the out-sourcing of care and the ability of citizens to balance the needs of the public and the private.

What is at stake is the creation of the material conditions that would potentially enhance the development of post-national forms of solidarity within Europe. However whatever the desirability of these strategies the recent French experience and the expansion of the European Union make it hard to be positive about the future of such strategies (Little 2002). Gorz is however asking some of the right questions in seeking to locate a politics beyond an obsessive concern with employment, the demonisation of the unemployed and an under-valuing of care and child rearing. According to Ulrich Beck (2000b) the main cultural project of our time is to find a creative balance between paid employment, practices of care and civic involvement. Europeans need to construct a society of multi-activity. This would inevitably involve a revaluing of spheres of activity like voluntary work, housework, parenting and friendship that fall outside of paid employment. At this point Beck introduces the concept of civic labour. By this he means the idea that citizens increasingly become moved from a world of anonymous privacy into working for the common good. While civic labour would not itself be formally paid it could be rewarded through civic money with the aim of creating spaces of experimental diversity. In other words, civic labour and civic money aim to create a genuinely diverse civil society strengthening initiatives that aim campaign on behalf of refugees, the environment, the disabled and literacy based issues. This provides an alternative social vision to a Europe of active employment and political passivity. Here the republican ideal of democratic participation rests less upon a basic income strategy, but perhaps more feasibly (at least at first) with civic money that could be traded in for pension entitlements, crèche facilities and educational establishments. There is a serious need to recreate the institutional conditions that make it possible for citizens to rebuild an idea of a society built upon solidarity. There are of course those who will argue that in a global market Europe simply cannot afford the welfare states of the past. This position is increasingly becoming the dominant common sense of newspaper columnists and the political classes. Yet such a view fails to adequately address the progressive privatization of modern

society and the shared capacity of citizens to nourish collective projects of social transformation (Castoriadis 1997).

### **European Post-Imperial Identity and the Politics of Conviviality.**

The argument thus far is for a European Left that attempts to reduce the scope of neoliberalism and the promotion of a culture of scepticism in respect of the benefits of consumerism, long hours and the outsourcing of care. This would arguably provide an alternative social and cultural imaginary to the competitive individualism required by neoliberalism. Such a post-materialist politics would also need to break with a Eurocentric imagination built upon the superiority of European values. This would require an enhanced questioning of ideas of a singular European heritage or paths to development that were necessarily suitable for other global societies. A reconstructed Europeanism would break with both the deformations of nationalism (which hide the ways in which we are culturally mixed in with one another) and the idea that capitalism offers a singular global path for development (Amin 1989). Much postcolonial thinking has sought to emphasise the need to decolonise Western/European imaginations in the light of the histories of European colonialism and continued patterns of dominance. In this respect, postcoloniality has sought to emphasise diasporic identity, inter-cultural dialogue and reflexivity as opposed to the language of civilisations and cultural nationalism (Pieterse and Parekh 1995). Rather than European self-congratulation, the ethos of a post-colonial Europe has been to discover that European 'civilisation' has largely consisted of a hybridity of cultural associations (Pieterse 1994). These are important theoretical and cultural developments and are increasingly necessary in the face of racist nationalisms, which seek to defend 'our' common heritage or home against others (immigrants, asylum seekers, migrant workers).

Here Europeans are represented as seeking to defend their social achievements against the greed and demands of 'outsiders'. In this respect, European citizenship has become increasingly complex as boundaries become at once both more porous and more policed (Benhabib 2002). Despite arguments for a post-national citizenship on the part of cosmopolitan intellectuals it seems that nationalism and the state can still claim an imaginary power that enforces an institutional racism through the rejection of the Other. Here nationality becomes the very essence of citizenship that needs to be defended against those foreigners who would seek its corruption. Notably the appeal to sameness continues to provide for many people an immediate antidote to anxiety that is created by economic and political uncertainty. The kind of progressive European solidarity that is being articulated here will be hard to create in a world where 'the nation' becomes an anchor in the troubled waters of globalisation. In this context, Paul Gilroy (2002) has argued that the idea of

diaspora offers an alternative cultural logic to nationalism in its ability to be able to disrupt the links between cultural identity and place. The Europe of diasporic communities and inter-cultural communication offers the possibility of a cosmopolitan politics and culture from below. However such postcolonial visions will have to learn to interrupt everyday nationalism and the languages of civilisations that is still part of the dominant culture. Etienne Balibar (2004) has argued that the closure of national citizenship and the exclusion of foreigners recall the colonial heritage of European societies. The recolonisation of immigration involves an administrative apparatus that aims to scrutinise populations from the less civilised South, illegal migrant workers with few formal citizenship rights and the development of new citizenship ceremonies aiming to ‘civilise’ new arrivals. Whereas The Maastricht treaty of 1992 allowed for the free settlement of European immigrants, others from non-EU countries are increasingly exposed to exclusion. This is particularly evident if we consider the large number of undocumented domestic workers from Third World countries (Lutz 1997). The hiring of domestic workers bearing an obvious relationship to the outsourcing of care and domestic labour required by increasingly overworked Europeans mentioned earlier.

Here my question is whether a more convivial European identity is actually possible? Could Europeaness become detached from neoliberalism, nationalism and the maintenance of male dominance and exclusive whiteness? Indeed if Europeaness is currently valued by many cosmopolitan liberals and socialists for providing a politics beyond the nation they have failed thus far to reinvent the term as a form of cultural politics that has a new relationship with cultural difference and the Other. Without such a cultural politics it is indeed hard to see how the post-material arguments of the previous section would not end up either enforcing European exclusivity or European superiority. The reinvention of Europeaness does not so much depend upon both pluralism and difference, but also the creation of new, less exclusive cultural identities that have learnt to act in the public without retreating into neurotic privatism. If a European post-work future offers one model of conviviality a postcolonial Europe offers another. The idea of a Europe that has rejected neoliberalism offers the prospect of citizens who have broken with market - defined definitions of the good life and have learnt to experiment with alternative pleasures as well as a renewed focus upon participatory citizenship. Such a vision of Europeaness needs to be coupled with a post-imperial cultural politics that welcomes difference. Europeaness is not so much a discoverable essence, but is more an ethos that seeks to enhance both different human qualities (beyond a hyper-competitive market orientated masculinity) and welcomes cultural difference (subverting the imposition of cultural nationalism). Such features will inevitably involve a cultural politics of translation. My argument is that in opposition to a Europe of bureaucrats and political elites, we cannot simply reverse this image and reinvest in a worker’s Europe in the manner of

Pierre Bourdieu (2001, 2003). A hybrid and post-materialist Europe could only emerge out of political and cultural struggles that denied the essentialist logic of pre-given fault lines. Instead a Europe of cultural difference would seek to displace older notions of superiority or simple pluralism (or indeed the preservation of national purity) with an international culture based upon the principles of negotiation and translation. Europeaness in this reading becomes the possibility of articulating a culture based not on the languages of lost civilisations, but upon ‘culture-as-political-struggle’ (Bhabha 1994: 35). If the idea of Europe has from the beginning been characterised by social and cultural struggles there is no reason why it cannot take on new oppositional meanings to articulate the citizenship needs of the post-national present (Delanty 1995).

## **European Futures**

The capacity to construct an alternative European post-national citizenship is an important contemporary political and cultural struggle. The danger is of course that Europeans will become so caught up in their own unique identity that it becomes separate from more global struggles. However the current economic and military dominance of the United States, the imperatives of neoliberalism and the rivals of nationalism and racism all require the discovery of new European political and cultural logics. The politics of such a position shifts the cultural logic of such processes to questions of becoming rather than being European. Indeed I would have to recognise along with Ash Amin (2004: 17) that Europeans are currently ‘in no mood to replicate the kinds of cultural experiment launched by the New Left and the student movement in 1968’. However with the current stalling of the European constitution there is at least an opportunity for us to ask not only what kind of Europe we want but also the kind of Europeans we wish to become. Such a political and cultural dialogue would need to articulate a cosmopolitanism from below that was not only concerned about the fate of fellow or potential Europeans. Despite many who have argued that a more modest Europeanism should disconnect from other parts of the world the logic of global polarisation, war and conflict does not make this a possibility. Despite the fears that Europeanisation actually means cultural homogenisation and environmental destruction I have sought to articulate a different cultural and political logic. Arguably rapidly increasing global poverty and the threat of global warming make the formation of new European political and cultural identities more and not less pressing (Pieterse 2002). If the Europeanism of the past has been closely associated with the twin forces of capitalism and nationalism now seems as good a time as any to imagine new more convivial possibilities.

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