

Understandings of European citizenship: a postcolonial perspective

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Europe conjures up a variety of images in the developing world. It is viewed as an advanced industrial region, inhabited predominantly by a white¹ Christian population and the centre stage of the Great Wars. Europe is also characterized by technological superiority, economic prosperity, enviable transport networks, and educational institutions of excellence. It is a constituent of the “rich north” and “superior West” and a symbol of liberal thought and enlightenment. Europe’s existence is multidimensional as it can be simultaneously a geographical, cultural and racial entity. Geographically it can be described as a landmass surrounded by the Atlantic on the west, the Arctic on the north, the Mediterranean Sea on the southern and the Ural mountains on the eastern side. Civilizationally, it can be argued that Europe was profoundly influenced by the Greek and the Roman empires. Over the years, the increase in transnational movements of people has turned Europe into a constellation of different ideologies, nationalities, cultures, ethnic and religious groups. Today, the plurality of the population is the most forceful signifier of Europe. Jeremy Rifkin (2004, p. 147) considers it “one of the most culturally diverse areas of the world” as the inhabitants “break down into hundred different nationalities who speak eighty seven different languages and dialects”.

This article aims to explore the different contours of European citizenship and in so doing, discusses the criticality of a European identity for understanding European citizenship. What does one mean by European citizenship? Is there a distinction between “European Citizenship” and “Citizenship of the European Union” or are these two terms synonymous? Who is a European citizen—one who believes in the values and ideals of Europe or one who is recognized by the Maastricht Treaty as a European citizen? Who belongs to Europe and who does not? Can European citizenship end the antagonism towards the “other” that has become so well entrenched in the consciousness of the natives? What are the problems with the notion of European citizenship? What can be done to promote the idea of European Citizenship? These are some of the questions and concerns addressed in the article.

It is important to remember however, that in any discussion on European citizenship, the centrality of the European Union has to be recognized even though European Union and Europe are not synonymous. The abstruseness of any definition of Europe makes it imperative to take

European Union as the starting point. It is also because the idea of a “European Citizenship” was first mooted and institutionalized by the Maastricht Treaty and a study of European citizenship cannot ignore this fact. According to McDonald, it has become difficult to talk about Europe without automatically referring to the European Union (in Stacul, Moutsou and Kopnina, 2006, p. 7). The disjunction of European Citizenship and the European Union would further deepen the obfuscation of European citizenship. It would make it necessary to make a distinction between “Global citizenship” and European citizenship. Therefore, this article contends that European citizenship, for all practical purposes, refers to the citizenship of the European Union. Its political system is highly decentralized and based on the voluntary commitment of the member states and its citizens and relies on sub-organizations to administer coercion and other forms of state power (Hix, 1999, p. 5). The European Union is not a state in the traditional Weberian meaning of the word. The power of coercion, through police and security forces, remains the exclusive prerogative of the national governments of the EU member states (Hix, 1999, p. 4).

“The European dream”²

Rabindranath Tagore, India’s celebrated literary figure, said that the history of man is shaped by the difficulties that it encounters and though history offers problems, it also claims solutions from us – the penalty of non-fulfillment being death or degradation (Tagore, 2002, p. 53).³ The European Economic Community, to some extent, was considered as the most effective solution to the problem of divisive nationalism facing early twentieth century Europe.

Europe’s belief in the nation-state and its efficacy in ensuring the welfare of its citizens had received a tremendous jolt after two decades of bloodshed, economic depression, totalitarianism and holocaust (Christiansen, 2001, p. 495). The sheer scale of destruction and loss of human lives made lasting peace in the region unfathomable. Writing about the situation in Europe in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, Gideon Rachman (2004) says,

In 1945, Germany was defeated and in ruins; France was half-starved and humiliated; Britain was bankrupt and on the point of losing its empire; Spain was a backward, isolated dictatorship; and the countries of central and Eastern Europe had been absorbed into a Soviet empire. Nobody would have guessed that Europe was at the beginning of a new golden age.

The existing political bedlam prompted many activists and thinkers to look for an alternative political system that would usher Europe in an era of security and stability. According to Christiansen (2001, p. 495), one of the many ideas that were deliberated upon, and received support from a large majority during the war was a federal union—a unification of the people of Europe under the rubric of a federal government. The European Union in its present form is a

result of this vision, which was aimed at rebuilding the shattered region after two devastating wars.

The European Union symbolizes a break with the modern conception of sovereignty and political territoriality. Fundamental to the idea of Europe is the act of “crossing boundaries”, which is connotative of mobility and placelessness (Stacul, Moutsou and Kopnina, 2006, p. 5). This is a key idea behind the conceptualization of European citizenship, which amongst other things, refers to “cultural and economic mobility” (Barry, 1993, p. 317). This mobility buttressed by various institutions and laws of the European Union, is expected to foster unity and a sense of attachment amongst Europeans.

In addition, Europe has moved beyond power into a self-contained world of laws, rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation (Kagan, 2004, p. 3). The liberal spirit of the sixties that sounded the death knell for modernism gave birth to what Rifkin calls the “European dream”. According to him, it symbolizes community relationships, cultural diversity, sustainable development, universal human rights and global cooperation (2004, p. 3). He feels that the European dream lies between postmodernity and all-embracing global age and acts as a bridge between the two eras (2004, p. 4).

The process of European integration, which has so far brought together 27 states, was historically concerned with economic and commercial benefits. The present and future aim of the integration process is to amplify the degree of involvement of the citizens, in order to strengthen their feeling of belonging to the European Union, while respecting the diversity of national and regional traditions and cultures (Kouveliotis, 2000). McGarry *et al.* (2006, p. 1) contend that the European integration has several dimensions, which pertain to normative changes, market integration and transnational structures. The normative changes refer to a new understanding of sovereignty, self-determination and rights of individuals. The free movement of goods, services, capital and labour characterize the market integration of the European Union. The European integration has encouraged the global trend towards neo-liberal economic policy with its emphasis on trade liberalization, low inflation, deregulation and tight fiscal budgets (Christiansen, 2001, p. 510). The European Union, Council of Europe, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and a number of inter-state agreements such as the Schengen Agreement on Border Controls are examples of the various transnational institutions that are a result of the European integration. Hence, the European

integration has progressed at three levels, namely the socio-political and cultural, economic and transnational levels.

As far as the European Union is concerned, it can be understood as a conflict between three sets of opposing ideas-European super-state versus Union of States; interventionist Europe versus Europe of peace and dialogue and; European democracy and governance versus national democracies. These together have given rise to two opposing camps purporting two major theoretical approaches to study the European integration - the "Intergovernmentalist Approach" of Stanley Hoffman and the "Supranationalist Approach". Hoffman refuted the claims of many scholars regarding the weakening of the state. He argued that the "nation-state and national governments were considerably more 'obstinate' than they were 'obsolete'" (in Cram, Dinan and Nugent, 1999, pp. 10-11). The intergovernmentalists consider state to be the most important actor in European integration and consequently concentrate on the study of politics between and within the member states. France and Britain are strong believers of this approach and hope to overcome European Union's democratic deficit by strengthening the Council of State Representatives (Christiansen, 2001, p. 500).

The supranationalists on the other hand, regard politics above the level of states as highly significant and give more attention to the political actors and institutions at the European level (Christiansen, 2001, p. 500). The proponents of this approach include eastern European states and smaller members who have much to gain from the strengthening the union. Supranationalists believe that if civic education in the 1800s could turn peasants into Frenchmen, why could it not now turn them into Europeans or at least into Europeans of French origin? (Nicolaidis, 2005, p. 100) Further, the supranationalists are trying to recreate a national mystique on the European level and firmly believe that creation of a single demos, that transcends the state in the case of the European Union, is necessary for a genuine political community of identity (Nicolaidis, 2005, p.101). While the Supranationalist approach works in the favour of smaller states, the Intergovernmentalist approach benefits the bigger powers.

Citizenship and European citizenship

Citizenship is often understood as a universal concept. All citizens in a nation-state are equal before the law. Simply put, citizenship is membership of a nation state, which is deemed as the solitary locus of the political community (Carens, 2004). Membership in a political community gives an identity to an individual that supersedes all the other identities like that of religion,

gender and class. According to Roy (2003), “Citizenship constitutes an overwhelming identity masking all other identities to produce masked and unmarked (and therefore) ‘equal’ citizens of the nation”.

This idealized conception of the nation-state presupposes a centralized administration and culturally homogenous form of political community (Carens, 2004). This however is a very narrow definition of citizenship considering that the context, in which citizenship operates, has changed. Today, the context is globalization that requires the unbinding of citizenship from territory and nation-state to accommodate the multitude of people, their allegiances and aspirations.

Though citizenship provides equal status to all, it does not ensure equality of conditions. According to Sassen (2004, p. 184), the formal equality granted to all citizens, does not give much importance to the substantive social and political equality, despite the current conditions having strengthened the notion of rights and aspirations that go beyond the formal legal definition of rights and obligations. As Rosaldo (2000, p. 253) puts it, one needs to distinguish between the formal level of theoretical universality from the substantive level of exclusionary and marginalizing practices.

The classical understanding of citizenship is presented by T H Marshall. According to him, citizenship refers to the “full membership in a political community” where membership entails participation by individuals to determine the conditions of their own association. This highlights two important objectives of modern citizenship: (Marshall, 1950) - (a) fostering horizontal camaraderie by the dissolution of the hierarchies that exist in a political community, and (b) integration of the marginalized and the subjugated. Marshall categorizes rights in into civil, political and social rights that follow a linear progression. Formulated in the eighteenth century, civil rights refer to liberty of the individual and his or her full and equal justice before the law. Indispensable to civil rights, are political rights that came about in the nineteenth century. Social rights emerged only in the twentieth century when demands for equal rights in employment, education and health gained prominence. In the recent times, however, this understanding of citizenship does not encapsulate the developments in Europe and of the welfare state in general. If one takes a look at liberal democracies, majority of the residents and workers with a legal status have been extended civil and social rights. However, political rights, like that of voting or contesting elections, have not been granted. In the case of the European Union, the citizens of the

member states and therefore citizens of the European Union, are given political rights, albeit limited, to vote in European elections in their country of residence. Since the acquisition of political rights is not a prerequisite to social rights and vice-versa, the sequencing of civil, political and social rights may not entirely be useful in the present day. Oommen emphasizes on political, cultural, economic and social rights but recognizes the existence of categories of population, which may not be treated equally. According to Oommen (1997, p. 10), full citizenship could be achieved by categories whose internality to the society or the system is not contested (Oommen, 1997, p. 12).

In the context of Europe, Kymlicka's idea of differentiated citizenship and affirmative action is most pertinent. Originating from the liberal school of thought, Kymlicka believes that difference and diversity is imperative and indispensable, and only by securing and institutionalizing group and differentiated rights can personal freedoms be ensured (Clayton, 2000). To be a citizen is to transcend one's ethnic, religious and other particularities and to think and act as a member of a political community. In reality, however, human beings seldom manage to dismember these attributes from themselves. Kymlicka's "multicultural citizenship" is essentially a critique of the unitary model of citizenship where the state does not make any distinction between its citizens on the basis of their ascriptive identities, and prescribes that every citizen enjoy the same legal rights and that every individual possess the legal status. The unitary model gives highest primacy to the state and is not relevant for the study of European Citizenship. It is closer to Walzer's idea of citizenship, which is linked to territory and emphasizes on the centrality of the nation-state. For example, in France, immigrants and other minorities are seriously perceived as a social problem and a danger to the social order. The idea of *Seuil de tolerance*⁴ that has characterized the French society during much of the twentieth century, suggests that every society has a threshold of tolerance concerning foreigners and that conflict is inevitable beyond that limit (Doty, 2003, p. 62). In order, to avoid "conflict" the state expects the immigrants to assimilate and equality in status and opportunity is conditioned upon the immigrants conforming to the dominant norms. The banning of the *hijabs* in the state-run schools is a case in point, where "a measure claiming to be justified as a universal and neutral step in actuality requires conformity with the dominant norm" (O'Connell, 2004, p. 47)

Yet this model fails to capture contemporary realities. The existence of liberal democratic principles and equal citizenship is insufficient to ensure group differentiated rights. It is also inadequate to deal with the multiple dimensions of memberships and allegiances. Kymlicka and

Norman identify three categories of groups whose “difference” may require recognition and argue that each kind involves a specific kind of group rights (Painter, 2005). First, the disadvantaged group which includes poor, the elderly and sexual minorities that may demand “special representative rights”. Such rights have the aim of enhancing the voice of oppressed minorities within the political system. The aim is to reach a stage when such special rights may no longer be required. Second, cultural groups who demand for the right to self-government and self-determination. They can be distinguished from immigrants and generally referred to as “national minorities” or “minority nations” (McGarry *et al.*, 2006, p. 2). These national minorities can exist as a minority within a host state (Irish nationalists in the United Kingdom); as minorities in the host state but majority in some other state (like Hungarians of Slovakia, Romania and Serbia); or as minorities in more than one state but majority in none (Basques in Spain and France) (McGarry *et al.*, 2006, p. 2). Immigrants form the third group who need to be awarded special rights to express their cultural particularity without any danger of socio-economic marginalization and discrimination.

According to Carens (2000), unitary model is empirically inadequate, as it does not correspond to actual practices in many states that embody recognition of multiple forms of belonging and of overlapping citizenships. It lacks theoretical substance in the sense that it fails to see the ways in which recognition of difference may be essential to fulfill the commitment to equality (Carens, 2000). The European citizenship, in comparison, is more accommodative and closer to the multicultural rights of Kymlicka.

European citizenship is distinct from the general understanding of citizenship, which is entwined with nation-state. It is a post-national opposed to national citizenship. European citizenship is acquired at the level of the nation-state. European Union along with Switzerland is the only exception with regard to acquisition of formal citizenship through birth, residence or naturalization as in both cases citizenship is acquired at the provincial level. In Switzerland, citizenship is acquired in the municipality under cantonal law. In the European Union, the citizenship is acquired in a member state and federal citizenship is derived from this decision. The crucial difference between these two cases is that Switzerland has a federal law on nationality that lays down the basic rules within which the cantons can adopt their own policies, whereas the European Union has no competency to interfere with or to harmonize its member states nationality laws (Bauböck, 2006, pp. 93-94).

According to Friedrich Kratochwill (1991), two focal points of citizenship are – (a) Belonging (determined by how the majority community chooses to define itself and, (b) Status (bundle of distinctive rights). He believes,

We all need it if we are to know ourselves and locate ourselves in the world....Who belongs to America? Successive generations of Americans have answered the question differently, with grave consequences for people excluded” (in Karst, 1989, p. ix)

The European project is as much cultural and political as it is economic and juridical. The development of a sense of European belonging is seen as an important prerequisite for the success of the European project (Shore, 2000, pp. 66-86). A public information pamphlet from the EU makes this explicit (Painter, 2005):

In order for people to feel like European citizens, they should first and foremost feel some basic sense or geographic attachment to Europe. In the context of European citizenship, it is also important that people feel psychologically attached to Europe. Although at the end of the 20th century one can still not speak of the existence of a truly European identity, the majority of EU citizens feel to some extent European.

Though the rights associated with European citizenship predated Maastricht, the 1992 Treaty of the European Union, also known as the Maastricht Treaty formally introduced the concept of European citizenship. The term “European Economic Community” was changed to “European Community”. According to its citizenship clause [Article 5 (C)] - “Citizenship of the Union is hereby established. Every person holding the nationality of a member state shall be a citizen of the Union.”⁵ The 1997 Draft Amsterdam treaty modified the Maastricht Citizenship clause by adding the phrase “Citizenship of the Union shall complement and not replace national citizenship”. This was to douse the anxiety of the member states over the exclusive control over citizenship issues. According to Deloy, these worries are not groundless as “European citizenship produces a reordering of identities” (Déloye, 2000, p. 211).

In the words of Ulrich Preuss (1995),

European citizenship does not mean membership in a European nation, nor does it convey any kind of national identity of ‘Europeaness’. Much less, of course, does it signify the legal status of nationality in a European state...European citizenship helps to abolish the hierarchy between the different loyalties...and to allow the individuals a multiplicity of associative relations without binding them to a specific nationality. In this sense, European citizenship is more an amplified bundle of options within a physically broadened and functionally more differentiated space than a definitive legal status.

Europe’s colonial project and European citizenship

The impact of colonialism has been significant on the citizenship debate in Europe. Colonialism divided the world into subjects and masters on one hand and “metropolis” and “colony” on the other. Decolonization witnessed a large number of former subjects immigrating to the land of their former colonial masters in search of better economic opportunities. Large-scale presence of subjects created a category of the “other”, which was different from the category of the “other” comprising of immigrants from Easter Europe. The divide between the “colored others” and natives was more accentuated than other group distinctions. “It seems that the identification with the European project remains marginal but that at the same time the boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘them’ are drawn between natives and immigrants from other EU-countries on the one hand and immigrants from outside Europe and especially from ‘non-white-countries’ on the other hand (Jacob and Maier, 1998). The presence of former subjects reinforced the division between “belongers-non-belongers” and “internality-externality” of a society.

Etienne Balibar (2003, pp. 38-39) has stressed the importance of including the history of colonial expansionism in any study on European citizenship. Edward Said calls this colonial history, the “colonial project” whose (Europe’s colonial history) inclusion is a reality of everyday life in Europe due to the increasingly larger presence of populations from colonial origins in the old metropolises despite the suffered discriminations (Mezzadra, 2005). Reflecting on colonial history is important if we are trying to understand what constitutes the identity of Europe, because the European recognition of otherness is an indispensable element of its own identity and its power. The article has adopted a postcolonial approach to reflect on the issue of citizenship because in post-colonial studies otherness is widely recognized as an essential element of European identity since the beginning of modernity (Mezzadra, 2005). In addition, postcolonialism denotes a situation in which the end of colonialism came about. It also denotes a situation in which the distinction between citizen and subject on one hand and metropolis and the colonies on the other hand, no longer organizes any stable world cartography. It is against this background that the paper briefly discusses the case of the United Kingdom.

A case study of the United Kingdom

A sound conception of citizenship divides the world into those who belong and those who do not, and in which legal status overlaps with identity. British immigration policy was not based on any meaningful conception of citizenship. In absence of a meaningful concept of citizenship, British immigration policy operated on a proxy. This proxy has been race (Joppke, 1999, p. 101).

The idea of “race” was employed in the United Kingdom to discuss “the colonies” ((Miles and Torres, p. 21). The end of British colonialism in the 1950s and large-scale migration of former subjects to Great Britain brought the problem of race from the periphery to the core.⁶ Few people in the United Kingdom would have envisioned such an overwhelming presence of former British subjects living amidst them. Since then concept of race and race relations has been central to citizenship debate in the United Kingdom.⁷

Malik (1996, p. 20) believes that for the British elite, its sense of self and identity was mediated through the concept of race. “Britishness”⁸ was a racial concept and large-scale migration from the colonies threatened to disrupt the racialised sense of national identity. A sense of impending danger due to the presence of large numbers of immigrants was created and later used to justify the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962 that placed effective controls on immigration from New Commonwealth countries. All the subsequent legislations pertaining to immigration and nationality were aimed at maintaining racial homogeneity of the United Kingdom.

The 1968 Immigration Act further underlined the British government’s deliberate policy of clamping immigration from Asia, Africa and Latin America. It was almost a xenophobic reaction to colored immigration and most racist legislation in post war Britain, which denied entry to Kenyan Asians with British passports. It was rushed through the parliament in three days and was in violation of European Commission of Human Rights (ECHR) (Malik, 1996, p. 23). *The Times* commented, “The labour Party has a new ideology. It does not any longer profess to believe in the equality of man. It does not even believe in the equality of British citizens. It believes in the equality of white British citizens” (In Malik, 1996, p. 24).

The Immigration Act of 1971 removed the privileged right of entry to the United Kingdom to Commonwealth citizens. Immigration policy in Britain is still fundamentally defined by the 1971 act. The British Nationality Act of 1981 created an even narrower definition of British citizenship, significantly modifying the doctrine of jus soil (acquisition of nationality by birth) which is the traditional nature of British citizenship (Doty, 2003, p. 50).

Along with legislations on nationality, immigration and asylum, the United Kingdom also enacted its first Race Relations act in 1965. This act prohibited racial discrimination in public places such as pubs or hotels. It was meant to outlaw the existence of a “colour bar” in Britain. The Second Race Relations Act came into force on 26 November 1968. In an attempt to justify the Act, Jim

Callaghan, the then Home Secretary had said while presenting it to the Parliament, “The House has rarely faced an issue of greater social significance for our country and our children.”⁹

According to Michael Banton, Britain’s Race Relations Acts suggest, “each individual could be assigned to a race and that relations between persons of different races were necessarily different from relations between people of the same race” (Miles, 1993, pp. 5-6).¹⁰ Some scholars claim that racism has been replaced by ‘cultural fundamentalism’ in defining who belongs or does not belong in Western democracies (Ong, 2000, p. 21).

Problems and challenges to European citizenship

European citizenship is yet to be concretized and till today, it largely remains in the realm on policy. The unconventionality of “European Citizenship” does not make it any easier for the ordinary person to understand its complexities. According to Vaclav Havel (in Groothues, 2002),

The most important task facing the European Union today is to come up with a new and genuinely clear reflection on what might be called European identity, a new articulation of European responsibility, an intensified interest in the very meaning of European integration in all its wider implications for the contemporary world, and the recreation of its ethos, or, if you like, its charisma.

First, it is derivative in the acquisition of citizenship status. The European Union does not have authority to grant the status of citizen; it can be acquired only through nationality of one of the Member States. The exclusive competence of the member states to determine who is a national, and therefore an EU citizen, deprives the Community of the right to decide who is subjected to the EC law (Rostek and Davies, 2006) . The idea of a “European citizenship” is considered one of the least successful and confounding aspects of the Maastricht treaty.

Second, national citizenship expresses the stronger identity. In case of conflicts between citizenship rights and duties attached at the federal and the sub-state level, it is the national citizenship that will take priority.

Third, it is an ‘elitist’ idea. Though the creation of the EU has allowed the war torn continent to tackle integration more pragmatically, EU’s fundamental problem is that it was not built on a democratic foundation; its citizens were not asked to vet the Unions creation (Nicolaidis, p. 98).

Fourth, many people in Europe do not understand the manner in which European citizenship works. The democratic model that the EU espouses is something that the Europeans cannot recognize easily. As an anonymous critic put it, “the concept of Union citizenship as embodied in the Maastricht Treaty amounts to nothing more than a new name for a bunch of existing rights, a nice blue ribbon around scattered elements of a general notion of citizenship. The dynamism is...pie in the sky” (in Guessgen, 2000).

Fifth, there is a lack of accountability in the European Union. It does not have a separate legislative or executive branch. Nicolaïdis (2005) contends that, the European Commission that comprises nationals from every member state holds more power than any national administration, is unelected. Though the ministers on the council ought to address the views and problems emanating from their national constituencies, they can easily claim to have been outnumbered and hence outvoted in Brussels. Similarly, the parliament cannot enact legislations and does not have any control over the disbursement of resources.

Sixth, the member states of the European Union have distinct histories. Others claim, “It is a watershed but warn that it will blur the precious differences among the members’ unique histories and identities, turning the EU into a monolithic United States of Europe” (Nicolaïdis, 2005, p. 97). Seventh, the European integration has opened up political space beyond the state that minorities can occupy. Unfortunately, this space remains limited and that EU and other European institutions remain largely intergovernmental in nature. Just as states decide whether cross-border and inter-state cooperation happens, they also control Europe’s political institutions and access to them ((McGarry *et al.*, 2006, pp. 16-17).. The European Union is predominantly statist in nature and this can be seen in its treatment of the regional languages. For example: Catalan is not on of the twenty official languages of the European Union in spite of the fact that millions of people speak Catalan in three European states and it is the tenth most widely spoken language in the European Union (McGarry *et al.*,2006, pp. 16-17).. The recognition of language is important as it is intricately connected to the self-esteem of minorities (McGarry *et al.*,2006, pp. 16-17).

Eight, identity originates in a “community”. Europe is extremely heterogeneous for that kind of a community to evolve ((Joppke, 1999, p. 191). The European Union has tried to introduce European identity with an anthem and a flag. During the Italian Presidency in 1995, provision was made to boost European identity in areas of great symbolic value and therefore capable of contributing towards an enhancement of shared community values (Groothues, 2002). However,

such efforts have not been very successful as due to the ever changing and ever evolving nature of identity. In this scenario, merely developing “Euro symbols” will deepen the democratic deficit of the Union.

Ninth, the European Union has an uphill task to unite the East and West politically, culturally, economically and ideologically. Cross border and inter state cooperation is one of the key objectives of the European Union. Batt opines (2006) that, while the British-Irish cooperation can be called on the biggest successes in Western Europe to bring an intractable conflict to an end; the same might not be true for the Eastern European countries. Further, most of these states oppose the reduction in their boundaries and few states wish to reclaim lost territory. Many states in the region are new states that gained freedom through secession and therefore jealously guard their territorial integrity and many states are such from which new ones are carved out (Batt, 2006, pp. 169-190). Example: Serbia and Hungary have not accepted their downsizing. Serbia and Hungary “have not just lost territory but territory that in nationalist mythology represents the ancestral heartland of Kosovo and Transylvania respectively” (Batt, 2006, pp. 169-190).

Tenth, excluding foreign residents from Union citizenship has further hampered their position in the European societies. Every new privilege enshrined in the European Union citizenship puts non-EU migrants in a worse position. The effect of Union citizenship on EU nationals can best be explained by the example of Germany where immigrants constitute 10 per cent of the total population of which 75 per cent come from non-EU countries (Rostek and Davies, 2006). Withol de Wenden feels, that the EU citizenship has established a hierarchical relation between citizens of member states and third country nationals. He says “at the centre we find the national of the State where he is living, then the Europeans whose rights are reciprocal with those given to foreigners in other European states, then the long term non-European residents, the non-European non-residents, the refugees, and at the margins, the asylum seekers and the illegals” (in Rostek and Davies, 2006, p. 25). “In post-war Europe foreign nationals, regardless of nationality, have been increasingly granted the same social, economic and civic rights which state citizens are entitled to. The legal status of foreign residents and nationals has become more and more equal all over Europe (Jacob and Maier, 1998)

Eleventh, the perceived nexus between Islam on one hand and religious extremism and political violence on the other hand has painted a negative picture of Muslims world over. Europe has witnessed strengthening of anti-Muslim sentiments. According to popular perceptions in most of

the West European states, “Muslims are making politically exceptional, culturally unreasonable or theologically alien demands upon European states” (Maddood, 2003, p. 100). This has heightened sensitivities towards the Muslims, leading to a perception that views Muslims as a homogenous group, inherently fundamentalist and violent, with little or no internal heterogeneity in terms of cultural, geographical or ideological orientations. The stereotyping of Islam and of the Muslims in general has been the most unfortunate fallout of 9/11, which has widened the gulf between the Muslims and their host societies.

Conclusion

Identity cannot be imposed. The European Union in the past has attempted to introduce a European identity with an anthem and a flag. During the Italian presidency of the European Union in 1995-provision was made to boost European identity in “areas of great symbolic value and therefore capable of contributing towards an enhancement of shared community values.” Then all these attempts were top down and raised questions about EU’s democratic legitimacy, efficiency and its transparency. The concept of nation state gained renewed strength, since people did not want to accept an identity imposed on them by an EU they thought of as bureaucratic, wasteful and far removed from the citizen. European citizenship in the true sense can be developed only by working at the grass roots level.

There is a need to generate a broad-based consensus on the issue of European Citizenship. A holistic understanding of citizenship cannot be developed if its onus lies solely with the bureaucrats in Brussels or Strasbourg. More and more ordinary people have to be involved. Without the “trickling down” of this holistic understanding of European citizenship, a European demos cannot be created.

Any attempt to create a citizenship based on a European identity surpassing national identities will be difficult and may not be the best way for the future of European citizenship. This will exacerbate the alienation and exclusion of minority communities. There should be mutual recognition of members’ identity rather than a common identity. For example: in India, the religious minorities have the freedom to have their respective personal laws despite a common criminal law, Similarly, affirmative action and positive discrimination have been adopted by way of special provisions for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes or for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The European Union will have to shed its distinctly western orientation, with its main institutions in Belgium, Luxembourg and France. With 27 members on board and many still waiting in the wings, the coming decade will in a way decide the future of the European Union. Groothues (2002) feels that “at the very least, there needs to be a symbolic counterbalance, making us aware of the enriching effect of integrating the accession countries. This is the first key element in constructing a new identity: embracing the dynamism of enlargement.”

The “White Paper: European Governance” published by the European Commission in 2001, spells out clearly, the direction in which the European Union needs to head. It contends (2001, p. 32),

Alienation from politics is not just a European problem, it is global, national and local. But for the Union it presents a particular challenge. Given the deep level of integration already achieved, people have similar expectations for the Union as they have for domestic politics and political institutions. But the Union cannot develop and deliver policy in the same way as a national government; it must build on partnerships and rely on a wide range of actors. Expectations must be met in different ways.

The White Paper identifies participation as one of the five principles necessary for good governance as it is expected to improve both the efficiency and legitimacy of European governance. It expects to connect Europe with its citizens. It is also expected to reduce the thrust on top-down approach and make the policy process more inclusive and accountable. All this should “create more confidence” in European institutions and generate “a sense of belonging to Europe.” The White Paper suggested a shift in the approach of the Union towards citizenship. In the past where sense of belonging has been attempted to be created through policies, the White Paper actually talks of its creation through democratic practices (Jenson and Saint-Martin, 2003). For Magistro,

It is indeed a supranational identity, a sense of European togetherness, that seems to be among the public goods the EU needs to advertise in this crucial phase of its development, a product that, if ‘consumed’, can help preserve the delicate balance between nationalism and supranationalism....Selling or simply publicizing a supranational identity to Europeans is a challenging and delicate enterprise as, generally speaking, these problematic ‘buyers’ already have well-defined local identities.

However, it is without doubt that the European Union is one of the biggest and most exciting experiments of the twentieth century. Despite its failings, it has provided millions across Europe with a hope of equal treatment. The project that was undertaken half a century ago will take some time to fructify. The idea of European citizenship is more symbolic than substantive in nature. One of the objectives of its establishment was to overcome the democratic deficit. However, the emphasis should be on establishing a European community where the “other” is seen in relation

to the “self” and not in opposition. Efforts should be made to foster fellow-feeling and create a “bond” between people.

Endnotes

¹ Fritz Groothues believes that ‘European’ has never been identified with ‘white and the modern immigration of many people from other continents and cultures, has only reinforced the need to rethink Europe’s relations with the wider world. See Fritz Groothues, “Imagine: A European Identity”

² A phrase borrowed from Jeremy Rifkin, *The European Dream: How Europe’s Vision of the Future is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004)

³ Rabindranath Tagore is one of the most prominent literary giants of India. He was awarded the Noble Prize for Literature, for his collection of poems, *Gitanjali* (“Song Offerings”) in 1913. He was a poet, novelist, philosopher, painter, composer and an educationist.

⁴ The Report was prepared by Corentin Calvez in 1969 for the Economic and Social Council and introduced into French policy making the link between limitation and integration. At the heart of the concept of *Seuil de tolerance* is the rather slippery concepts of cultures and civilizations to which foreigners and non-foreigners are presumed to belong or not-belong.

⁵ Maastricht Treaty, “Provisions Amending the Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community with a view to establishing the European community- Article G,” [Online: Web] <http://europa.eu.int/en/record/mt/title2.html>

⁶ According to Immanuel Wallerstein, ‘race’ refers to the horizontal division of labour in the world economy, ‘nation’ refers to the political superstructure of this horizontal system-the sovereign nation states whereas ethnic group refers to the household structures within nation states which make sure that large sectors of unpaid labour are maintained. The differentiation of centre and periphery and the domination of the former over the latter, their differences began to be articulated in terms of ‘race’. Race thus can be referred to as the expression and the consequence of the geographical concentration of the horizontal division of labour. See Immanuel Wallerstein (1988), *The Politics of the World Economy: The States, the Movements and the civilizations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁷ In the late summer of 1958, a group of white thugs in Notting Hill, London and in Nottingham went on ‘nigger hunts’, attacking West Indians with knives and broken bottles. No one was killed but the ‘race riots’ shocked the public. From then on, immigration and race were high politics.

⁸ According to a study done by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) in 2005, ‘Britishness’ was represented through eight dimensions-Geography, National symbols, People, Values and attitude, Language, Citizenship, Cultural habits & behavior and Achievements. As UK passport holders, all the participants knew they were British citizens, but not everyone attached any value significance to being British. In Scotland and Wales, white and ethnic minority participants identified more strongly with each of those countries than with Britain. In England, white English participants perceived themselves as English first and as British second, while ethnic minority participants perceived themselves as British; none identified as English, which they saw as meaning exclusively white people. Thus, the participants who identified most strongly with Britishness were those from ethnic minority backgrounds resident in England. Ethnic minority participants also drew on other sources of identification. Muslims were the only minority group to use religion as an identity marker. These various identities became more or less salient in different situations. They were seen as being compatible with Britishness. See Commission for Racial Equality, “Citizenship and Belonging: What is Britishness”, Research Study (London: ETHNOS Research and Consultancy, 2005) [Online: Web] http://www.cre.gov.uk/downloads/what_is_britishness.pdf

⁹ 1968 Race Relations Act. The 1968 Act kept the existing definition of racial discrimination, but it made the law broader in scope. It became unlawful to discriminate on racial grounds in new areas, such as employment, providing goods, facilities, or services, housing and trade unions. It also covered advertising.

¹⁰ This according to Robert Miles is a 'circular definition of race. A "race" is a group of people defined by "their race": this formulation assumes and legitimizes as a reality that each human being "belongs" to a "race".