INTRODUCTION

At the official end of postmodernism, no notion is more contested, especially in the NL, than that of multiple and complex identities.

This fatigue with complexity or return of steady and firm modes of belonging is due to a large extent to our historical context. We now live in a very anxious social space in a world that is caught in the spiralling violence of civilizational wars. This is no time for self-reflexivity and questioning, but we are rather encouraged to take sides and proclaim loud and clear what we stand for.

To anybody looking at us from an outside perspective, we must look like a funny lot, poised on the verge of constant nationalistic and expansionist explosions. Not unlike the characters in a Woody Allen movie, we could say: 'every time we hear Beethoven's 9th symphony, we feel like invading Poland' – and off we go, ready to defend our borders by trespassing those of others.

The depth of the cognitive and emotional sense of dispossession that seems to strike otherwise normal and well-balanced people at the sheer mention of complexities and maybe slight contradictions in their own sense of identity was best exemplified over the last `few weeks and months by the controversy surrounding our very postmodern royal family. Her RH Princess Maxima's comment about the report by the Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid suggesting that maybe a fully rounded, unitary and forever self-evident Dutch identity may not exist met with the fury and disappointed disapproval of up to 75% of the Dutch population – most of whom never really went near the report in question.

There is a profound sense of fear and insecurity circulating in our society at present – what exactly are we scared of ?

A NEW POLITICAL ECONOMY of NEGATIVE PASSIONS

These are strange times indeed and strange things are happening!

Some master-narratives circulate, which reiterate familiar themes: one is the inevitability of capitalist market economies as the historically dominant form of human progress (Fukuyama, 1989; 2002). Another is a contemporary brand of biological essentialism, under the cover of 'the selfish gene' (Dawkins, 1976) and new evolutionary psychology. Another resonant refrain is that God is not dead. Nietzsche's claim rings hollows across the spectrum of contemporary global politics.

We now live in a militarized social space, under the pressure of increased enforcement of security and escalating states of emergency. The Cold war doctrine of Mutually Agreed Destruction (MAD) mutated into the global notion of Self-Assured Destruction (SAD). Nuclear paranoia has given way to viral politics, hence the need for total coverage against any eventuality: accidents are imminent and certain to happen – weapons of mass contamination are in store everywhere, starting from the food we eat. The epidemics, or catastrophe - will definitely break out - it is only a question of time. Graffiti on the walls of the Tate Modern Gallery, London, says it all: "After Cold War, Global Warming!".

In this context, mass political activism was replaced, especially after September 11, 2001, by public collective mourning. The politics of melancholia became dominant: after being MAD, we're all SAD. Or, as

another popular saying goes: ' God is dead, Marx is dead and I am not feeling too well myself!'.

There is, of course, much to be mournful about, given the pathos of our global politics: our social horizon is war-ridden and death-bound. We live in a culture where religious-minded people kill in the name of 'the Right to Life'. Moreover, bodily vulnerability is increased by the great epidemics: some new ones, like HIV, Ebola, SARS or the bird flu; others more traditional, like TB and malaria. Health has become more than a public policy issue: it is a human rights and a national defence concern.

While new age remedies of all sorts proliferate and the planet yoga expands forever more, our sensibility has taken what I call a forensic shift: 'bare life', as Agamben (1999) argues, marks the liminal grounds of probable destitution – infinite degrees of dying. Hal Foster (1996) describes our schizoid cultural politics as 'traumatic realism' – an obsession with wounds, pain and suffering. Proliferating medical panopticons produce a global patho-graphy (Seltzer, 1997).

Political philosophy reflects this mood – rediscovering with Derrida (2002) the mystical foundations of Law and political authority; or turning towards Schmidt's political theology (Schmidt, 1996), we have definitely moved away from high secularism. I choose to pass on the popularity of Leo Strauss (Norton, 2004) in American neo-theological conservative political thought. Now that even Francis Fukuyama has come out as an "ex-neo-con", that seems like yesterday's news.

The culture of mourning and the political economy of melancholia are dominant – they are not reactive or necessarily negative. A number of critical theorists argue forcefully the case for the productive nature of melancholia and its potential for creating solidarity (Gilroy, 2004; Butler,

2004a). I am also convinced that melancholia expresses a form of loyalty through identification with the wound of others and hence that it promotes ecology of belonging by upholding the collective memory of trauma or pain. My argument is rather that the politics of melancholia has become so dominant in our culture that it ends up functioning like a self-fulfilling prophecy, which leaves very small margins for alternative approaches.

MY MAIN POINT IS:

That ideas of identity as multiple, mobile and nomadic are by now the most accurate way to describe our historical condition.
Giving in to fear or anxiety does not help a lot.

In such a context there is much to be gained by:
- Adopting a non-unitary and multi-layered vision of identity
- Linking it to new practices of citizenship

I want to propose therefore an alliance between two parallel but distinct projects and lines of argumentation, which also correspond to different forms of consciousness. They are, on the one hand, the deconstruction of the unitary idea of Europe as the 'cradle' of civilization – with its corollary implications of liberal individualism and universalism; on the other, the deconstruction of the unitary idea of identities, cultural, national or others.

I call this process the becoming-minoritarian of dominant identities.

The effects of this global trend upon the notion of citizenship are enormous. The classical model that links citizenship to belonging to a territory – a nation state- and opposes it to a condition of statelessness is no longer adequate. The nation state is clearly not the only or even the most important factor in defining citizenship.

The phenomenon globally known as **flexible citizenship** describes the de-linking of the three basic units that compose citizenship: the ethnic origin or place of birth; the nationality or bond to a nation state and the legal tructure of actual citizenship.

These three factors are dis-gregated and dis-articulated form each other and become re-arranged in a number of interesting ways.

- Give examples from the Biennale project
- Give examples from looking around the room to international students flow and colleagues: the university has historically been an itinerant exercise; medieval students travelled from one centre to the other. In the global era this feature of our history intensifies and sort of takes over

THREE CASES

1. The effects of neo-liberal de-regulation of the labour market

2. World migration and population flows

3. The specific case of the EU

These three cases represent different configurations of the central problem I am discussing and shape specific legal and ethical aspects of citizenship practices today.

1. NEOLIBERALISM

Displacement is a central feature of advanced capitalism itself .

As Laclau (1995) and Dahrendorf (1990) argued, processes of hybridization and nomadic identities are neither marginal, nor self-chosen phenomena. De-regulated capitalism itself functions by organizing constant flows and displacements, in such a way as to erode its own foundations. Transnational capital flow erodes the nation state (Mouffe 1994); and contemporary technologies are accelerating this trend (Castells 1996) by setting up cyber networks of surrogate citizenship or mediated belonging . James Clifford (1994), who is more sympathetic to metaphors of travel and displacement than to nomadism; Zygmunt Bauman juxtaposes the pilgrim to the tourist and the nomad as social categories with profoundly different ethical codings.

Transnational feminism and race theorists have written volumes on

diasporic, post-colonial, black, mestiza, nomadic and hybrid subjects.

These accounts are narratives of the globalized diaspora, which, at the end of

this millennium concern most communities, though in different degrees.

This is not to say that rootlessness and homelessness, or constant mobility

and displacement are universal and undifferentiated features. The differences

in degrees, types, kinds and modes of mobility and – even more significantly

– of non-mobility need to be mapped out with precision and sensitivity.

Non-unitary subject positions: migrants, hybrids, nomads, expatriates,

cyborgs, asylum seekers are not equal locations that can be metaphorized

interchangeably.

They are rather key elements of our historicity.

They function as generic terms for the indexation of different degrees of

access to rights and entitlements for different subject positions in the

historical era of globalization. They are social categories for whom

traditional descriptions in terms of 'marginals', 'migrants', or 'minorities'

are, as Saskia Sassen (1995) suggests, grossly inadequate.

From the angle of 'different constitutive others' this inflationary production of different differences simultaneously expresses the logic of capitalist proliferation and exploitation, but also the emerging subjectivities of positive and self-defined others. It all depends on one's locations or situated perspectives. Far from seeing this as a form of relativism, I see it as an embedded and embodied form of enfleshed materialism.

Methodologically speaking, the first issue here concerns the need to map out the differences between the expatriate entrepreneurs, the jet-setting media star, the mobile sportsman or top athlete or soccer player and the illegal migrant workers and asylum seekers– to mention two extremes. The second is to analyze the effect of the globalized labor market in terms of the de-linking of ethnicity/nationality and citizenship and their re-bundling in terms of entitlements and benefits that are structured by global capital flow and access to technological know-how.

In other words, in the neo-liberal model, having or not having citizenship is being replaced by opportunities created by transnational market conditions. Flexible citizenship here describes the moves of subjects structured

opportunistically across the market conditions, but positioned differently across them.

2. WORLD MIGRATION

The second case has already been mentioned in the former.
We now live in a world which is organized along multiple axes of mobility, circulation, flows of people and commodities (Cresswell 1997).

One of the most significant effects of globalization in Europe is the phenomenon of trans-culturality in a pluri-ethnic or multi-cultural European social space. World-migration – a huge movement of population from periphery to centre, working on a world-wide scale of 'scattered hegemonies' (Grewal and Kaplan 1994) – has challenged the claim to an alleged cultural homogeneity of European nation-states and of the European Union.

Avtar Brah's analysis (1996) foregrounds the emerging new diasporic and hybrid identities which challenge any assumption of monoculturalism in the new Europe. Diaspora is a space of transition and exchange which defines the indigenous peoples as much as the nomadic subjects of the

post/colonial world order. Cross-referring to Gilroy, Brah defines diasporic identities as being both about roots and routes; that is to say, they are 'processes of multi-locationality across geographical, cultural and psychic boundaries' (Brah 1996: 194). These are accentuated under the impact of the new information technologies, which dislocate the relationship between the local and the global and thus complicate the idea of multi-locality. Brah adopts the feminist politics of location as the kind of cognitive mapping that can best do justice to the new web of diasporic identities and other new forms of ethnicities emerging in the new world order.

Present-day Europe is struggling with multi-culturalism at a time of increasing racism and xenophobia. The paradoxes, power-dissymetries and fragmentations of the present historical context require that we shift the political debates from the issue of differences between cultures, to differences within the same culture. These are the shifting grounds on which periphery and centre confront each other, with a new level of complexity that defies dualistic or oppositional thinking

Feminist theory argues that if it is the case that a socio-cultural mutation is taking place in the direction of a multi-ethnic, multi-media society, then the transformation cannot affect only the pole of 'the others'; it must equally dislocate the position and the prerogative of 'the same', the former centre.

World migration as an internally differentiated pattern of human flow

redistributes citizenship accordingly.

3. The European Dimension

The notion of a 'new' European identity as a multicultural social space within the framework of the European Union (EU) is controversial especially in the current political context of increasing Euroscepticism and after the two disastrous referenda in France and the NL.

 The EU is positioned simultaneously as a major player within the global economy and as an attempt to strike an alternative social space. Globalization challenges the tradition of post-war European citizenship base don welfare state provisions and thrown it open to the challenge of opening markets and migration flows.

The EU tries to constitute a solid social democratic and hence progressive project, which not only counteracts the aggressive neo-liberalism of the U.S.A. on a number of key issues (privacy; telecommunication; genetically modified food and the environment), but also tries to value human rights and world peace.

This process of revision of identity triggers contradictory reactions. Not the least contradictory is the simultaneous celebration of trans-national spaces on the one hand, and the resurgence of hyper-nationalisms at the

micro-level on the other. The global city and Fortress Europe stand both face-to-face and as two sides of the same coin (Sassen 1995).

Politically, on the Continent, the opposition to the European Union is led by the authoritarian Right, which is nationalist and xenophobic. As Stuart Hall (1987; 1990) put it, the great resistance against the European Union, as well as the American suspicion of it, is a defensive response to a process that aims at overcoming the idea of European nation-states. The short-range effect of this process is a nationalist wave of paranoia and xenophobic fears, which is simultaneously anti-European and racist. I have argued that late postmodernity (Braidotti 2002a) functions through the paradox of simultaneous globalization and fragmentation. It is as if the law of the 'excluded middle' did not hold, and one thing and its opposite can simultaneously be the case (Appadurai 1994: 324-39). Thus, the expansion of European boundaries coincides with the resurgence of micro-nationalist borders at all levels in Europe today. Unification coexists with the closing down of borders; the common European citizenship and the common currency co-exist with increasing internal fragmentation and regionalism; a new, allegedly post-nationalist, identity coexists with the return of xenophobia, racism and anti-Semitism (Benhabib 1999). The disintegration of the Soviet

empire marks simultaneously the triumph of the advanced market economy and the return of tribal ethnic wars of the most archaic kind. Globalization means both homogenization and extreme power differences (Eisenstein 1999).

Strong opposition to the EU is also voiced, however, by the nostalgic Left, which seems to miss the topological foundations for international working class solidarity. The cosmopolitan tradition of socialism militates against the European dimension: solidarity with the third world always carries a politically-correct consensus, whereas an interest in European matters is often dismissed as being vain and self-obsessive.

What's left of he Left has often been unable to react with energy and vision to the historical evidence of the dislocation of European supremacy. It has also been slow to understand the non-dialectical and schizophrenic nature of advanced capitalism (Deleuze and Guattari 1972; 1980).

In relation to this, I want to defend a process of the 'becoming-minoritarian' of Europe (Deleuze and Guattari 1980) as a way of both bypassing the binary global-local and of destabilizing the established definitions of European identity. My position rests on the assumption of the

decline of Eurocentrism as a historical event, and that this represents a qualitative shift of perspective in our collective sense of identity.

My argument is about the 'becoming-minor' of Europe, in the sense of a post-nationalist European space.

The project of European unification involves a shift of consciousness, which in turn expresses the critique of the self-appointed missionary role of Europe as the alleged centre of the world. A post-nationalist vision of Europe as the start of a process of becoming-minoritarian promotes a de-territorialization and a re-grounding of this false universalism. Such a dislocation of white Eurocentric superiority amounts to a sober awakening to the concrete particularity of the European situation. The work on power, difference and the politics of location offered by postcolonial and anti-racist feminist thinkers who are familiar with the European situation helps us illuminate the paradoxes of the present (Spivak, 1987; Hall, 1990, 1992; Brah, 1993, 1996; Harding, 1993; Lutz et alia, 1996; Yuval-Davis and Anthias, 1989).

The European Union as a post-nationalist project has to do with the change of consciousness towards a more accountable eco-philosophy of multiple belongings. This is the opposite of the grandiose and aggressive universalism of the past: it is a situated an accountable perspective. It's about turning our collective memory to the service of a new political and ethical project, which is forward-looking and not nostalgic. It is a gesture of creativity that produces horizons of hope and constructs the possibility of living futures.

EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP REVISITED

A disaggregated idea of citizenship emerges from the current EU situation – as a bundle of rights and benefits that can accommodate both citizens and migrants. An attempt to accommodate cultural diversity without undermining European liberal democracies and the universal idea of individual human rights.

For instance Habermas calls for a serious European constitution, that is to say Europe as a political project that would involve the consolidation of a European public sphere that might strengthen the shared political culture of European democracies and welfare states.

I would call for the becoming-nomadic or minoritarian off European citizenship.

I would relate this post-nationalistic sense of identity to the political notion of flexible citizenship.[4] The focus is on the area of citizenship and multi-cultural identity in the framework of the 'new' European Union (Ferreira et al. 1998).

A radical restructuring of European identity as post-nationalistic can be concretely translated into a set of 'flexible forms of citizenship' that would allow for all 'others' – all kinds of hybrid citizens – to acquire legal status in what would otherwise deserve the label of 'Fortress Europe'. This would involve dismantling the us/them binary in such a way as to account for the undoing of a strong and fixed notion of European citizenship in favour of a functionally-differentiated network of affiliations and loyalties, which

finally, for the citizens of the Member States of the European Union, leads to the disconnection of the three elements discussed above: nationality, citizenship, national identity. According to Ulrich Preuss, such a European notion of citizenship, disengaged from national foundations, lays the ground for a new kind of civil society, beyond the boundaries of any single nation-state. Because such a notion of 'alienage' (Preuss 1996: 551) would become an integral part of citizenship in the European Union, Preuss argues that all European citizens would end up being 'privileged foreigners'. In other words, they would function together without reference to a centralized and homogeneous sphere of political power (Preuss 1995: 280). Potentially, this notion of citizenship could therefore lead to a new concept of politics, which would no longer be bound to the nation-state. Of course, this notion of European citizenship is only a potential one and is highly contested at the national level, by both reactionary nostalgic forces and third-world-obsessed leftist political groups. I, however, see it as the most honest and pragmatic way to develop the progressive potential of the European Union, and also of accounting for the effects of globalisation upon us all. These effects boil down to one central idea: the end of pure and steady identities, and a consequent emphasis on creolization, hybridization, a multicultural Europe, within which 'new' Europeans can take their place alongside others (Bhavnani 1992).

In her recent work on European citizenship, Benhabib (2002) interrogates critically the disjunction between the concepts of nation, the state and cultural identity. Solidly grounded in her theory of communicative ethics, Benhabib works towards the elaboration of new rules of global democracy within a multicultural horizon. A self-professed Kantian cosmopolitan, Benhabib argues forcefully that 'democratic citizenship can

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be exercised across national boundaries and in transnational contexts'
(Benahbib 2002: 183). She is especially keen to demonstrate that the
distinction between national minority and ethnic group does very little to
determine whether an identity/difference-driven movement is 'democratic,
liberal, inclusive and universalist' (Benhabib 2002: 65).

Within the specific location of Europe, important work has been done
on analyzing the on-going process of the European Union, both as a player
in the global economy and as an attempt to move beyond the traditional
grounds on which European nationalism has prospered, namely essentialist
identities. Of great importance in this respect is the work of Etienne Balibar
(2001; 2002) on Europe as a transnational space of mediation and exchange.
This new European identity is internally differentiated and hence non-
unitary and committed to trans-cultural hybrid exchanges. It is a situated
perspective based on multiple border crossings, on confrontations with
shifting frontiers and borders, and on a deep commitment to pacifism and
human rights.

The European Union project has to do with the sobering experience of
taking stock of our specific location and, following the feminist politics of
location, adopting embedded and embodied perspectives. This is the
opposite of the grandiose and aggressive universalism of the past: it is a
situated and accountable perspective. It is about turning our collective
memory to the service of a new political and ethical project, which is
forward-looking and not nostalgic. Daniel Cohn-Bendit recently stated that
if we want to make this European business work, we really must start from
the assumption that Europe is the specific periphery where we live and that
we must take responsibility for it. Imagining anything else would be a
repetition of that flight into abstraction for which our culture is (in)famous:

at best, it may procure us the benefits of escapism; at worst, the luxury of guilt. We have to start from where we are. This is a plea for lucidity and for accountability. We need both political strategies and imaginary figurations that are adequate to our historicity.

This is, however, only one side of the paradoxical coin of European deconstruction in the age of the European Union. The other side, simultaneously true and yet absolutely contradictory, is the danger of recreating a sovereign centre through the new European federation. That the two are simultaneously the case makes European identity into one of the most contested areas of political and social philosophy in our world at the moment. This reactive tendency towards a sovereign sense of the Union is also known as the 'Fortress Europe' syndrome, and has been extensively criticized by feminists and antiracists. They warn us against the danger of replacing the former Eurocentrism with a new 'Europ-ism' (Essed 1991), i.e. the belief in an ethnically pure Europe. The question of ethnic purity is crucial and it is, of course, the germ of Eurofascism.

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE THREEE CASES

1. The neo-liberal model engenders the 'politics of life itself'

'The politics of life itself' designates the extent to which the notion of bio-power has emerged as an organizing principle for the proliferating discourses that make technologically mediated 'life' into a contested political field (Rose, 2001).

One of the manifestations of this historical context is what has been called the genetic social imaginary (Franklin, Lury and Stacey, 2000). This is manifested in the market economy through a tendency to use a terminology borrowed from genetics and evolutionary theory for the purpose of commercial and political discourses. An instance of this is the emphasis on the 'next generation'of gadgets, cars and consumers' electronics. Contemporary media and culture also spreads a sort of genetic citizenship as a form of spectatorship by promoting the visualization of the life of genes in medical practices, popular culture, cinema and advertising. Another aspect to this phenomenon is the uses of genetics in political debates on race, ethnicity and immigration, as well as public debates ranging from abortion and stem-cell research to new kinship and family structures. Discourses about vitalism (Fraser, Lury and Kember, 2005) and vital politics are also circulating.

Issues of power and power relations are central to this project. The notion of 'life itself' lies at the heart of bio-genetic capitalism (Parisi, 2004) as a site of financial investments and potential profit. Technological interventions neither suspend nor do they automatically improve the social relations of exclusion and inclusion that historically had been predicated along the axes of class and socio-economics, as well as along the sexualized and racialized lines of demarcation of 'otherness'. Also denounced as 'bio-piracy' (Shiva,1997), the on-going technological revolution often intensifies patterns of traditional discrimination and exploitation. We have all become the subjects of bio-power, but we differ considerably in the degrees and modes of actualisation of that very power.

. Some thinkers, for instance, stress the role of moral accountability as a form of bio-political citizenship, thus inserting into the ethical debates the

notion of 'bio power' as an instance of governmentality that is as empowering as it is confining (Rose 2001; Rabinow, 2003; Esposito, 2004). This school of thought locates the political moment in the relational and self-regulating accountability of a bio-ethical subject that takes full responsibility for his/her genetic existence. The advantage of this position is that it calls for a higher degree of lucidity about one's bio-organic existence – which means that the naturalist paradigm is definitely abandoned. The disadvantaged of this position, however, in a political context of dismantling the welfare state and increasing privatisation, is that it allows a neo-liberal perversion of this notion. Bio-ethical citizenship indexes access to and the cost of basic social services like health care to an individual's manifest ability to act responsibly by reducing the risks and exertions linked to the wrong life style. In other words here bio-ethical agency means taking adequate care of one's own genetic capital. The recent campaigns against smoking, excessive drinking and overweight constitute evidence of this neo-liberal normative trend that supports hyper-individualism. Other social examples of neo-liberal bio-citizenship are the social drive towards eternal youth, which is linked to the suspension of time in globally mediated societies (Castells, 1996) and can be juxtaposed to euthanasia and other social practices of assisted death

2. THE POLITICS OF SHEER SURVIVAL OR BARE LIFE

Bio-power, as Foucault argued (1976, 1984a; 1984b), refers not only to the government of the living, but also to multiple practices of dying.

This explosion of discursive interest in the politics of life itself affects also the question of death and new ways of dying. Bio-power and necro-politics are two sides of the same coin (Mbembe, 2003).

'Life' can be a threatening force, as evidenced by new epidemics and environmental catastrophes that blur the distinction between the natural and the cultural dimensions. Another obvious example of the politics of death is the new forms of industrial-scale warfare, the privatization of the army and the global reach of conflicts, specifically the case of suicide bombers in the war on terror. Equally significant are the changes that have occurred in the political practice of bearing witness to the dead as a form of activism, from the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo to humanitarian aid. From a post-human perspective comes the proliferation of viruses, from computers to humans, animals and back.

Relevant cultural practices that reflect this changing status of death can be traced in the success of forensic detectives in contemporary popular culture. The corpse is a daily presence in global media and journalistic news, while it is also an object of entertainment. The dislocation of gender roles in relation to death and killing is reflected in the image of women who kill, from the revival of classical figures like Medea and Hecuba to Lara Croft.

A rather complex relationship to death has emerged in the technologically mediated universe we inhabit: one in which the link between the flesh and the machine is symbiotic and therefore establishes a bond of mutual dependence. This engenders some significant paradoxes: the human body is simultaneously denied, in a fantasy of escape, and strengthened or re-enforced. Balsamo (1996) stresses the paradoxical concomitance of effects surrounding the new posthuman bodies as enabling both a fear of dispossession and a fantasy of immortality and total control: "And yet, such beliefs about the technological future 'life' of the body are complemented by a palpable fear of death and annihilation from uncontrollable and spectacular body-threats: antibiotic-resistant viruses, random contamination, flesh-eating bacteria" (Balsamo 1996: 1-2). In other words, the new practices of 'life' mobilize not only generative forces, but also new and subtler degrees of extinction

These concerns have both the neo-liberal (Fukuyama,20020) and the neo-kantian thinkers struck by high levels of anxiety about the sheer thinkability of human future (Habermas, 2003). In opposition to this,   I would like to defend the politics of 'life itself' and approach these phenomena in a non normative manner. They are the social manifestations of the shifting relation between living and dying in the era of the politics of 'life itself'.

Giorgio Agamben (1998) calls 'bare life' or 'the rest' after the humanized 'bio-logical' wrapping is taken over. 'Bare life' is that in you which sovereign power can kill: it is the body as disposable matter in the hands of the despotic force of power (potestas). Included as necessarily excluded, 'bare life' inscribes fluid vitality at the heart of the mechanisms of capture of the state system. Agamben stresses that this vitality, or 'aliveness', however, is all the more mortal for it. This is linked to Heidegger's theory of Being as deriving its force from the annihilation of animal life.

The politics`of bare life or perennial state of insecurity refre to the condition of neglect, abuse and marginalization to which lage sectors of the worlkd population are confined. It is the condition of indistinction in which non-citizens are kept.

There is a bio-political side to this as well, of course –

- think of situations like Chernobyl, or new Orleans or other great catastrophes in what Ulrich Beck calls "global risk society'.
- the bio-political management of the world population Or the medical and genetic screening of prospective migrant and asylum seekers
- bio-welfare as a social norm, whether it is in the chase after weapons of mass destructions or the abolition of pandemics like the bird flu
- think of humanitarian aid as a form of global citizenship where health and survival are the basic requirements of being a citizen

In the EU the ideal is the joining of a healthy migrant body to an unharmed social host so as to sutain high standards of living , ie: citizenship as bio-legitimacy.

In this discussion, citizenship is disggregated along the new and multiple axes that redefine what counts as a human today. Post-national, bio-genetic. Technological, cyber-backed – these are the post-human traits of being a citizen and a subject today and they require complex and flexible models of belonging. They de0-territorialize citizenship neven further.

The EU model has to do with identification and dis-identification

The report quoted by princess Maxima, which caused so much distress among the Dutch, repositions citizenship in terms of active participation to the running of society and in terms of identitifcatiuon.
Identification is sub-divided into :

- Functional identification inn terms of being able to function and participate in different sector of society
- Normative identification: respecting the law and rules and regulations including cultural norms about sexuality and the management of the private sphere
- Emotional identification : getting emotionally attached to the place

The project of developing a new kind of post-nationalist identity is related to the process of dis-identification from established, nation-bound identities. This dis-location can lead to a positive and affirmative re-location of European identities following the feminist politics of locations. I have stressed both the need for an adequate European social imaginary for this kind of subject-

position, and the difficulties involved in developing this. There is no denying that such an enterprise involves a large sense of loss and is not without pain. No process of consciousness-raising can ever be painless. Migrants know this very well. In the research presented in this book, for instance in the analysis of border-crossing and home, we find multiple expressions of belonging. Home is lived both at the material and at the imaginary level, where it might be a destination, or something which is repeatedly deferred. It is not necessarily a place of 'origin', but can also mean belonging in multiple locations. In addition, my own experience in Australia has taught me to what an extent the process of dis-identification is linked to the pain of loss. This is not, however, the pathetic expression of a nostalgic yearning for a return to the past, but rather a mature, sobering experience, similar to the loss of illusions and of self-delusions of classical Greek tragedies.

A post-nationalist sense of European identity and of flexible citizenship does not come easily, and in some ways is even a counter-intuitive idea. It requires an extra effort in order to come into being, as it raises the question of how to change deeply-embedded habits of our imagination. How can such in-depth transformation be enacted? This question is made all the more urgent by the extent to which we are already living in post-nationalist ways and in a post-nationalist social space. This is partly due to the obvious effects of globalisation, and the conformism and homogeneization of cultures brought about by telecommunication. It is also related, however, to the impact of the European Union on the legal, economic and cultural structures in which most dwellers in Europe function nowadays. The impact of educational, scientific and cultural exchanges is very significant in this respect, and the implementation of the common currency has done the rest. I think that it is precisely the rather large role played by these post-nationalist

instances in our social life that has generated the reaction against them in the form of various types of nostalgic identity-claims that are proliferating across Europe today.

What we are lacking is a social imaginary that adequately reflects the social realities which we are already experiencing, of a post-nationalist sense of European identity. We have failed to develop adequate, positive representations of the new trans-European condition that we are inhabiting in this Continent. This lack of the social imaginary both feeds upon and supports the political timidity and the resistances that are being moved against the European political project. More work is needed on the role of contemporary global media in both colonizing and stimulating the social imaginary of global cultures (Hall 1992; Shohat and Stam 1994; Gilroy 2000; Braidotti 2002b).

At least some of the difficulty involved is due to the lack of a specifically European – in the sense of European Union – public debate, as Habermas (1992) put it in his critique of the absence of a European public sphere. This is reflected in the rather staggering absence of what I would call a European social imaginary. Thinkers as varied as Passerini (1998), Mény (2000) and Morin (1987) all signal this problem, in different ways. Passerini laments the lack of an emotional attachment to the European dimension on the part of the citizens of the social space that is Europe. Elsewhere she has developed hypotheses on a possible critical innovation of what a 'love for Europe' could mean (Passerini 2003). For Mény the problem is rather the lack of imagination and of visionary force on the part of those who are in charge of propelling politically the European Union. For Edgar Morin, Europe is ill-loved and somewhat unwanted, 'une pauvre vieille petite chose' (Morin 1987: 23).

My question therefore becomes: how do you develop such a new European social imaginary? I think that such a notion is a project and not a given. Nonetheless, this does not make it utopian in the sense of being over-idealistic. Even the contrary: it is a virtual social reality which can be actualized by a joint endeavour on the part of active, conscious and desiring citizens. If it is utopian at all, it is only in the positive sense of utopia: the necessary dose of dream-like vision without which no social project can take off and gather support.

Something along these lines is expressed with great passion by Edgar Morin, when he describes his becoming-European as the awakening of his consciousness about the new peripheral role of Europe in the post-Second World War era, after his years of indifference to Europe, in the tradition of Marxist cosmopolitanism and international proletarian solidarity. By his own admission, Edgar Morin overcame his own mistrust for the European dimension of both thinking and political activity in the late 1970s, when, like most of his generation, he took his distance from the unfulfilled promises of the Marxist utopia. This sobering experience made him see to what an extent the new world-wide binary opposition USSR/U.S.A. had dramatically dislocated the sources of planetary power away from Europe (Morin 1987).

The concrete result of this new consciousness-raising was that Morin started taking seriously the scholarly work connected to the research of European roots as both a cultural and political specificity. This is the paradox that lies at the heart of the quest for a new, post-nationalist redefinition of European identity: it becomes thinkable as an entity at the exact historical time when it has ceased to be operational as a social or symbolic reality. The process of becoming-Europeans entails the end of fixed Eurocentric identities and it thus parallels the becoming-nomadic of subjectivity.

The liberatory potential of this process is equally proportional to the imaginary and political efforts it requires of us all. The recognition of the new multi-layered, trans-cultural and post-nationalist idea of Europe in this case would only be the premise for the collective development of a new sense of accountability for the specific slice of world periphery that we happen to inhabit.

It is an embedded European account of my own traditions or genealogies. In other words, it is only one of many possible locations which may apply to some of the people who situate themselves - in terms of genealogical consciousness and the related forms of accountability – with respect to the kind of power-relations that go with the continent of Europe. I want to present this kind of embodied genealogical accountability as my contribution to our discussions on gender and power. Through the pain of loss and dis-enchantment, just as 'post-Woman women' have moved away from compulsory gender dichotomies towards a redefinition of being-gendered-in-the-world, 'post-Eurocentric Europeans' may be able to find enough creativity and moral stamina to grab this historical chance to become just Europeans in the post-nationalist sense of the term.

My political strategy in this regard is to support the becoming-minoritarian of Europe. This is the claim of a European space as an open and multi-layered project, not as a fixed or given essence. A space of mediation, as Balibar suggests (2001, 2002), which can be turned into critical resistance to hegemonic identities of all kinds. My own choice to rework whiteness in the era of postmodernity is firstly to situate it, in the geo-historical space of Europe and within the political project of the European Union. This amounts to historicizing it and de-mystifying its allegedly 'natural' locations. The next step is to analyze it critically, to re-visit till it opens out to a new practice of flexible and multi-layered European subjectivity.

The third step consists in trying to re-locate European identity, so as to undo its hegemonies tendencies. I refer to this kind of identity as "nomadic". Being a nomadic European subject means to be in transit within different identity-formations, but sufficiently anchored to a historical position to accept responsibility for it. The key words are: "accountability" and the "strategic re-location of whiteness". It is also a way of positing the 'becoming-minoritarian of Europe' by dispelling the privilege of invisibility that was conferred to Europe as an alleged centre of the world. By assuming full responsibility for the partial perspective of its own location, a minoritarian European space opens up a possible political strategy for those who inhabit this particular centre of power in a globalized world marked by scattered hegemonies, and hence no longer dominated by European power alone.

Complex shifting locations, not multitudes.

Recently the issue of Europe as a political alternative has become central to Antonio Negri's work (Friese, Negri and Wagner, 2002), on the aftermath of the best-selling Empire. Negri's approach offers a significant point of comparison with but also of divergence from Deleuze's politics. Negri combines a monistic Spinozist political economy with a post-Marxian brand of materialist analysis of labour conditions under advanced capitalism. Negri is looking for a productive space of becoming-revolutionary and locates it in the notion of the revolutionary multitude as the motor of world resistance. He also singles out the new European Union as the political arena where the – allegedly rhizomic - politics of the multitudes confront the gravitational pull of the globalised empire. I find this view however, rather over-enthusiastic.

The multitude is in fact the appointed alternative to global capitalism. This normative injunction expresses a wish I share, namely that of creating social horizons of political hopes. I cannot fully share however, Hardt and Negri's zealous conviction that this is the only or the necessary revolutionary option sanctioned by history and the will of the multitude. This belief assumes that someone – the multitude- is actually in charge of the course of history and that its collective voice merges with the prophetic desire of the intellectuals. Such a claim seems to me untenable today.

Becoming ethical

What can be the ethical import of the process of multiple belongings and becoming-nomadic or minoritarian, in which affects take centre stage? Becoming-ethical is part of this same process, which involves a radical repositioning or internal transformation on the part of subjects who want to become-minoritarian in a productive and affirmative manner. It is clear that this shift requires changes that are neither simple, nor self-evident. They mobilize the affectivity of the subjects involved and can be seen as a process of transformation of negative into positive passions. Fear, anxiety and nostalgia are clear examples of the negative emotions involved in the project of detaching ourselves from familiar and cherished forms of identity. To achieve a post-nationalist sense of European identity, requires the dis-identification from established, nation-bound references. Such an enterprise involves a sense of loss of cherished habits of thought and representation, and thus it is not fee of pain. No process of consciousness-raising ever is.

The beneficial side effects of this process are unquestionable and in some way they compensate for the pain of loss. Thus, the critical relocation of whiteness can produce an affirmative, situated form of anti-racist European subject-position. In a more Spinozist vein, it also produces a more adequate cartography of our real-life condition, free of delusions of grandeur. This mature and sobering experience is similar to the cathartic eye opening or moral awakening of Greek tragedies. It is an enriching and positive experience; nonetheless pain is an integral part of it. Migrants, exiles, refugees have first hand experience of the extent to which the process of dis-identification from familiar identities is linked to the pain of loss and uprooting. Diasporic subjects of all kinds express the same sense of wound,

as we saw in the earlier sections of this chapter. Multi-locality is the affirmative translation of this negative sense of loss. Following Glissant, the becoming-nomadic marks the process of positive transformation of the pain of loss into the active production of multiple forms of belonging and complex allegiances. What is lost in the sense of fixed origins is gained in an increased desire to belong, in a multiple rhizomic manner, which transcends to classical bilateralism of binary identity formations.

The qualitative leap through pain, across the mournful landscapes of nostalgic yearning is the gesture of active creation of affirmative ways of belonging. It is a fundamental reconfiguration of our way of being in the world, which acknowledges the pain of loss, but moves further. That is the defining moment for the process of becoming-ethical: the move across and beyond pain, loss and negative passions. Taking suffering into account is the starting point, the real aim of the process, however – is the quest for ways of overcoming the stultifying effects of passivity, brought about by pain. The internal disarray, fracture and pain are the conditions of possibility for ethical transformation. Clearly, this is an antithesis of the Kantian moral imperative to avoid pain, or to view pain as the obstacle to moral behavior. Nomadic ethics is not about the avoidance of pain, but rather about transcending the resignation and passivity that ensue from being hurt, lost and dispossessed. One has to become ethical, as opposed to just applying moral rules and protocols as a form of self-protection. Transformations express the affirmative power of Life as the vitalism of 'bios-zoe', which is the opposite of morality as a form of life insurance. I will develop this further in chapters four and five.

The awakening of ethical and political consciousness through the pain of loss has been acknowledged by Edgar Morin (1987). He describes his

'becoming-European' as a double affect: the first concerns the disappointment with unfulfilled promises of Marxism, which has been Morin's first political engagement and passion. The second is compassion for the uneasy, struggling and marginal position of post-war Europe, squashed between the USA and the USSR. The pain of this awareness that Europe was ill loved and a castaway: "une pauvre vieille petite chose"[1] (Morin, 1987:23) results in a new kind of bonding, and a renewed sense of care and accountability. The sobering experience – the humble and productive recognition of loss, limitations and shortcomings – has to do with self-representations. Established mental habits, images and terminology, railroad us back towards established ways of thinking about ourselves. Traditional modes of representation are legal forms of addiction. To change them is not unlike undertaking a disintoxication cure. A great deal of courage and creativity is needed to develop forms of representation that do justice to the complexities of the kind of subjects we have already become. We already live and inhabit social reality in ways that surpass tradition: we move about, in the flow of current social transformations, in hybrid, multi-cultural, polyglot, post-identity spaces of becoming (Braidotti, 2002). We fail, however, to bring them into adequate representation. There is a shortage on the part of our social imaginary, a deficit of representational power, which underscores the political timidity of the European unification process. Some of this difficulty is contingent and may be linked to the lack of a European public space, as Habermas suggests (1992); or the lack of visionary leadership among politicians, as Meny put it (2000). In any case, European issues fail to trigger our imagination and make us dream (Passerini, 1998).

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[1] Translation: "A poor old thing".

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The real issue, however, is conceptual: how do we develop a new post-nationalist European social imaginary, through the pain of dis-identification and loss? Given that identifications constitute inner scaffolding that supports one's sense of identity, how do changes of this magnitude take place? Shifting an imaginary is not like casting away a used garment, but more like shedding an old skin. It actually, happens often enough at the molecular level, but in the social, it is a painful experience. Part of the answer lies in the formulation of the question: "we" are in <u>this</u> together. This is a collective activity, a group project that connects active conscious and desiring citizens. It points towards a virtual destination: post-nationalist Europe, but it is not utopian. As a project it is historically grounded, socially embedded and already partly actualized in the joint endeavor, i.e. the community, of those who are actively working toward it. If this were utopian at all, it is only in the sense of the positive affects that are mobilized in the process: the necessary dose of imagination, dreamlike vision and bonding, without which no social project can take off.

Collectively, we can empower some of these alternative becomings. This process is collective and affective: it is driven by a desire for change that is sustained by some, if not many. The European post-nationalist identity is such a project: political at heart, it has a strong ethical pull made of convictions, vision and desire. It does require labour-intensive efforts on the part of all and thus is risky. As a project, it also requires active participation and enjoyment: a new virtual love that targets less what we are, than what we are capable of becoming. This liberatory potential is directly proportional to the desire and collective affects it mobilizes. The recognition of Europe as a post-nationalist entity is the premise to the creation of a sense of accountability for the specific margin of the planet that Europeans occupy. The

becoming-minoritarian of Europe enacts this reconfiguration as an active experiment with different ways of inhabiting this social space.

Far from being the prelude to a neo-universalistic stance, or its dialectical pluralistic counterpart, the relativistic acceptance of all and any locations, the project of the-becoming minoritarian of Europe is an ethical transformation by a former centre that chooses the path of immanent changes. Through the pain of loss and disenchantment, just like 'post-<u>W</u>oman women' have moved towards a redefinition of their 'being-gendered-in-the-world', 'post-nationalist Europeans' may be able to find enough self-respect to become the subjects of multiple ecologies of belonging.

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[4] This term has gained widespread acceptance; I first read
it in Aihwa Ong's work on Chinese migrants (Ong 1993).