

LECTURE 1

IDENTITY

- THE 'NARRATIVE OF THE NATION'

- *national history*
- *literature*
- *through the media*
- *through popular culture*

these provide:

- *a set of stories, images, historical events, national symbols and rituals*

... .. which represent:

- *the shared experiences, triumphs and disasters, which give meaning to the nation*

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:

- establishing over time a greater degree of mutual acceptance or tolerance amongst the different peoples (different populations of each state) of the European Union.
- through processes such as:
 - *education*
 - *cultural exchanges*
 - *communication processes*
 - *economic and political processes*
 - *social celebrations/anniversaries/festivals*

LECTURE 1

IDENTITY

EUROPEAN COMMISSION SURVEY JUNE 2001

PERCEPTIONS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. There was a widespread feeling of a loss of values, and a loss of a previously cohesive social fabric.
 - a dilution of the values of solidarity and community
 - increasing drug use
 - increasing crime and insecurity
 - a fear of the destabilisation of society by uncontrollable immigration
 - isolation of young people

2. There was a feeling that economic liberalism had gone too far, or had gone wrong
 - people were concerned about the deterioration of essential public services (health, education, public transport)
 - people were concerned about the growing gap between rich and poor
 - BUT the general overall improvement in the economic situation in most of the Member States was rarely mentioned.

LECTURE 1

IDENTITY

In order to construct a European Union 'identity' the European Union must be 'experienced' by the citizen in his or her everyday life:

- The European Union must make itself felt in (be part of) education and culture, news, and communications
- The European Union must also protect the rights of the individual and strengthen democracy
- The European Union must have a set of institutions which have legitimacy (a legitimacy achieved through the 'will' of the people)
- The image of the European Union must be one that demonstrates the solidarity of European people and the values (diverse values) of European society

LECTURE 1

OBSTACLES

1. A growing diversity, differences, in the level of socio-economic development across the European Union
 - this threatens to obscure the basic commonality of interests

2. Processes of profound structural economic change, which brings a rise in unemployment in some regions, and in turn this threatens the already overstretched social systems and social stability in the European Union

3. These two things (above) fuel a rise in nationalism in some states
 - through fear and anxiety about economic and social issues (unemployment, immigration)
 - fear and anxiety tempt people to seek refuge in a return to the nation-state and national symbols, rather than transnational symbols