

AALBORG UNIVERSITET

EU articulated in the Brexit Debate

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Abstract

On the June the 23 2016 the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union and became the first country to do so. The referendum question was “Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?” (Gov.uk, 2016). The leave side won with 51,9% of the vote while 48,1% voted remain.

The focus of this thesis is to examine in what way the European Union is articulated in regards to the United Kingdom in the referendum debate, both explicit and implicit, with a focus on national identity by analysing the both the media debate and the parliamentary debates up to the referendum 23 June 2016. The research questions are: How are the different ‘we/us’ categories defined? What is the focus of the narratives of these categories? To what extent did sovereignty play a role in the debate?

Ole Wævers, Monsterrat Guibernau, Anthony D. Smith, Benedict Anderson and Anthony Giddens along with Robert M. Entman make up the theoretical framework. Qualitative Content Analysis is the main method of analysis and structured the analysis along with framing theory.

Three main themes found by QCA are Economy, Migration and Free-movement and Sovereignty

The overall findings were that the remain side wanted stay in the European Union so they would continue to be part of the Single Market, as that is their ideal relationship symbol. EU reformed and with the Single Market are cornerstones in Britain future prosperity. In the overall dominant economic frame the UK relates to the EU because of concrete economic interest, the EU have something the British need namely access to the European consumer.

A collective ‘we/us’ including both the UK and the EU never gains salience, beyond that what is expressed in a trade relationship. The ‘we/us’ remain a constellation of ‘us, Britain’ and ‘us, Britain but with an articulated Scottish and/or Irish presence’. Economic gain in constantly weight against loss of sovereignty. The EU’s perceived democratic deficit, in the optic of the remain, is in large

part due to the lack of transparency, and Britain should take the role of leader by example to reform the EU. The EU is seen as vital to the creation of jobs and foreign investment in the UK.

The Leave side sees the EU's bureaucracy as a symbol of its undemocratic ways and as a waste of money. The Leave side also wanted to continue to have access to the Single Market but did not care for a relationship beyond a trade agreement.

Content

Introduction.....	6
Problem Formulation.....	7
Research Questions	9
Methodology	9
Research design.....	10
Method	13
Data	15
Theory.....	22
Media theory, mediatization and framing	22
The Nation, the State and the Nation-state	25
Nationalism.....	28
National Identity.....	29
European Identity.....	31
Analysis.....	33
Economy	33
Continuing free-trade access to single market.....	34
The cost benefit relationship.....	36
The importance of jobs.....	38
Economy Conclusion.....	40
Migration and free-movement.....	41
Wages and migrants	41
Control	43
Migration and free-movement conclusion.....	44
Sovereignty.....	45
Democratic deficit and Bureaucracy	45
Security	46
Sovereignty conclusion.....	48
Conclusion	48
Bibliography.....	51
Data-list	52

Introduction

On the June the 23 2016 the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union and became the first country to do so. The referendum question was “Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?” (Gov.uk, 2016). The leave side won with 51,9% of the vote while 48,1% voted remain.

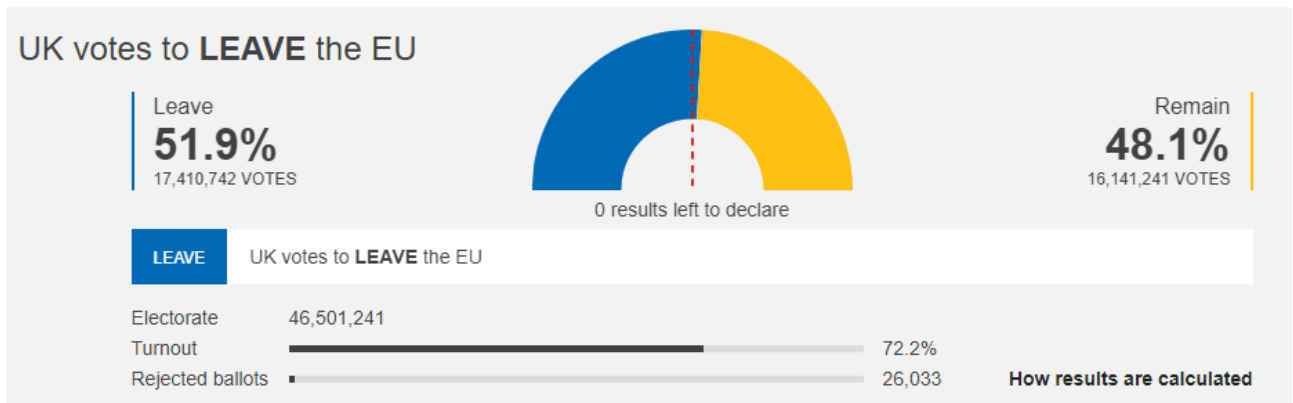


Figure 1. Source BBC

England and Wales both had a majority of leave votes whereas the majority in both Northern Ireland and Scotland voted to remain. With every council in Scotland voted remain (BBC, 2016)

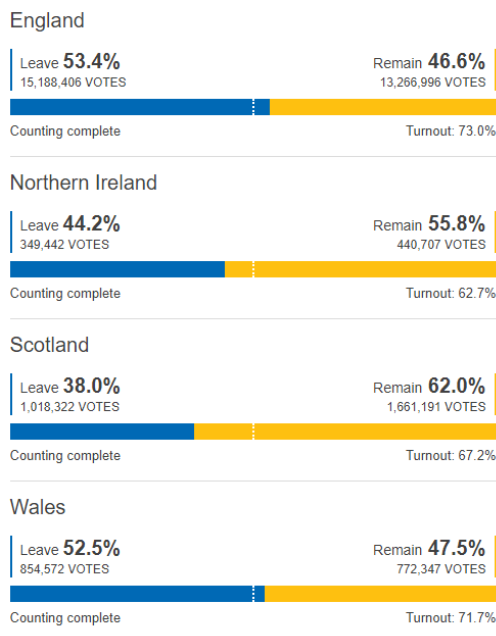


Figure 2. Source BBC

This indicates a division in the United Kingdom along already stressed borders. The relationship between Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom, especially England or more accurately Westminster, has been strained by the independence referendum in 2014 in Scotland. The SNP (Scottish National Party), the leader of the Scottish government, has since they lost the referendum in 2014 sought to gain support for a second referendum.

The referendum result also highlighted a division within the European Union that the vote seems to have accentuated.

In the European Union the member states are waiting to figure out how to enforce article 50 of the Lisbon-treaty for the very first time. One of the major issues separating the UK and the EU is how to secure a new trade agreement between the UK and EU, which is causing economic uncertainty along with security policy disagreements.

With such an interesting and relevant vote and important referendum, both the public media-debate and parliamentary debate surrounding it is important to investigate in order to establish an understanding of what influenced the outcome of the vote.

The thesis focuses on how the European Union was articulated and what narratives and themes were dominate in the debate.

Problem Formulation

That national identity is fundamental to both foreign and national political decisions is at the very core of this project. The central question is inspired by Ole Wæver's discourse theory about security- and foreign-policy in the EU and his sentiment that identity is a constellation of collective identifications articulated and negotiated with others (Wæver, 2000).

This paper seeks to investigate in what way the European Union is articulated in regards to the United Kingdom in the referendum debate, both explicit and implicit, with a focus on national identity. This is the main aim of the thesis.

According to Wæver's theory, this would allow me to attempt to answer "what kind of European integration do these 'we/us' categories, narratives and conceptions of sovereignty allow? ",

though as Wæver says it does not explain the details but the big picture (Wæver 2000, p. 279). As the situation now is that the United Kingdom has voted to leave the EU, perhaps then, it is not what kind of integration but what kind of relationship will be pursued by the United Kingdom. And as in any relationship the different partners want different things from it, so what could be attempted to answer would be “what kind of relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union, if any, would the United Kingdom pursue?” This will be a secondary focus of the project leading towards a discussion, however, the primary focus will be on identifying the concepts, both in the newspapers and the parliamentary debates.

Central to the project is the relationship between the national and the supranational that is the European Union, in addition to Wæver’s theory, Anthony Giddens’ and Montserrat Guibernau’s views on identity and especially European identity are central to the theoretical foundation.

Giddens like Wæver believes that identity is a negotiated constellation but views it like layers on top of one another “European identity is distinctive in this sense, that it must be cultivated in parallel with national cultures – themselves internally diverse and contested. As in the economic and political spheres, this is not a zero-sum game. The one identity does not ipso facto subvert the other.” (Giddens, 2008, p.221). The national and supranational exist together; one more prominent than the other or equally present depends on the context.

Guibernau points to an unbalance in the nature of the two sides of the spectrum, that the European identity is frailer and not anchored as deeply as the national identity “In my view, at least while in its early stages, European identity is best defined as an emergent ‘non-emotional’ identity, in contrast with powerful and emotionally charged national identities of our time.” (Guibernau, 2007, p.116). This forms the hypothesis for the thesis.

The base for the clash between national and supranational identity lies within the understanding of what a nation is, namely that a nation is perceived to be sovereign, as described by Benedict Anderson “[a nation] it is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.” (Anderson, 2016, p.6) In his well-known book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of* from 1983.

Research Questions

The aim of this project is to examine the concepts of nation, state (nation-state) and Europe, and how the perceived relation between them is defined in the media debate in the British newspapers and the parliamentary debates up to the Brexit vote.

- *How are the different 'we/us' categories defined?*
- *What is the focus of the narratives of these categories?*
- *To what extent did sovereignty play a role in the debate?*

The focus of this paper will be on the debate in the British media in the two weeks up to the referendum held on 23 June 2016 thus showing the peak of the debate. This timeframe was based on the assumption that the closer to the vote the more interest and focus there was on the Brexit referendum and consequently the media would set aside more space and time to cover it.

Especially how attitudes towards the EU were expressed and what they were connected with, how the EU was contextualised in the debate will be the principal focal point and red thread throughout this paper. And what kind of narrative or narratives was constructed in the media regarding the relationship between the EU and Britain, as sovereignty is often contrasted with supranational institutions.

The three research questions are meant to shape the direction of the paper, like stairs, leading from the concrete to the more abstract. Finding how the 'we/us' in the debates are defined will shed light on the perceived structures in the relationship between the UK and EU. Analysing the narratives of the 'we/us' categories, using framing theory, allow the project to investigate the direction of the relationship or the wanted future direction. As sovereignty is at the heart of the understanding of the nation, and national identity, and what is perceived to clash with supranational institutions it is important to examine the role it played.

Methodology

In the first part of this chapter the research design for the project will be outlined and discussed, followed by a discussion of Qualitative Content Analysis as the primary analytical approach. The

chapter will conclude with a review of the data two types of data, the newspaper articles and the parliament debate, for the project.

Research design

This is a qualitative data-driven study of the public debate in Great Britain leading up to Brexit on June 23th 2016. As mentioned in the problem formulation the main focus of this project is to examine the concepts of and perceived relation between nation, state and Europe so as to, according to Wæver, try to understand what kind of integration these concepts allow:

“By analysing domestic policy discourse spaces, it becomes possible to localise structures that contribute to understanding unique, singular situations in international politics and in that way contribute to an actual political analysis of situations, threats and dilemmas.” (Wæver 2000, p. 283)¹

The situation following the Brexit referendum is a unique situation in European politics, as the result means the first country will leave the European Union. The debate in the newspapers and parliament are two such spaces. The reason for choosing newspaper articles and parliamentary debates and the particulars are elaborated on below in the data section.

The design of this paper follows Margrit Schreier's outline for an analytical approach based on her version of Qualitative Content Analysis as described in her book *Qualitative Analysis in Practice* ; the steps are as follows “(1)Deciding on your research question, (2)selecting your material, (3)building a coding frame, (4)dividing your material into units of coding, (5)trying out your coding frame, (6)evaluating and modifying your coding frame, (7)main analysis, (8)interpreting and presenting your findings” (Schreier, 2012, p. 6).

The research questions were explained above and the details of the data will be explained below in a paragraph of its own. To answer the research questions in accordance with qualitative content analysis I developed an initial coding frame to make a preliminary search for relevant data for the project. The two data types, newspaper articles and parliamentary debates, in the time frame provided a copious amount of potential data. To reduce the data corpus to a more manageable

¹ Original quote: “Ved at analysere indenrigspolitiske diskursive rum er det muligt at lokalisere strukturer, der bidrager til at forstå unikke, singulære situationer i international politik og dermed at bidrage til en egentlig *politisk* analyse af situationer, trusler og dilemmaer” (Dyberg, Hansen & Torfing (Ed), 2000, p. 283)

amount I applied three search words to the newspaper article search and two search words to the parliamentary debate search. The search words for the newspaper article are: Brexit* and EU* and Europe*. And the search words for the parliamentary debate search are: Brexit, EU. These step is purely a preliminary sorting of data. The reasons for what data were chosen are explained below in the data paragraph.

The analysis is data driven to the extent that the coding frame is a product of the data available and also a theorised way of answering the problem formulation and research questions. The process of building the coding frame is a back and forth between the main theory, Wæver's theory on identity and foreign policy as mentioned in the problem formulation, and several read-throughs of the material. The material determines what is possible in regard to coding and analysis and the "...research question specifies the angle from which you examine your data." (Margrit Schreier, 2012, p. 3)

The newspaper articles and the parliamentary debates are on dataset analysed with the same coding frame and constitute one dataset. However, the coding frame was first based on initial readings of the newspaper articles. The initial coding frame was:

- Brexit*
- EU*
- UK*

The tree words were colour coded to show groupings and what context they were being used or discussed in so as to show the prevailing themes in the texts. Brexit was yellow and contained variations of Brexit, referendum and "vote to leave"; EU was pink and contained variations of the European Union, Europe and European; UK contained variations of the United Kingdom, Britain and government.

A side benefit of this first coding was to also narrow the dataset, articles which did only contain a low amount of the tree words were screened out, as were articles where the context of the words were not relevant for the study. If Brexit and/or the relationship between the UK and the EU were not the focus of the article but mentioned just in passing, it was deemed of no relevance and sorted out.

The central themes emerging from this first coding are as follows:

- Economy
- immigration
- Sovereignty

The three themes and the initial three keywords together form the final coding frame:

- Brexit (yellow): Referendum*, Vote to leave*, Brexit*, Vote to stay*
- EU (pink): Europe*, European*, European Union*, European Parliament*, Brussels*
- UK (green): Britain*, British*, United Kingdom, Government*, Westminster*
- Economy (orange): Market*, Money*, Trade*, Job*, Economy*
- Migration (purple): Free-movement*, immigration*
- Sovereignty (blue): Security*, self-determination, sovereignty

The final coding frame consists of six categories with assigned keywords. The coding frame is the foundation for the entire analysis “QCA allows you to develop a systematic description of your material, by assigning segments of the material to the categories of your coding frame. The coding frame is therefore at the heart of the method. (Schreier, 2012, p. 58). The keywords were chosen because they are close in meaning to the main categories they are assigned to or because they represent different aspects of the same category.

As mentioned previously three themes, economy, migration and sovereignty, became apparent in the data when developing the final coding frame, how the themes and the initial three keywords are being connected in the data is what will allow me to answer the proposed research questions and accordingly the problem formulation. The correlation is the heart of the analyses, for that reason are both the themes and initial keywords part of the final coding.

This coding frame was first applied to the newspaper section of the data set and then to the parliamentary debates. The reason for this is purely a practical one, the parliamentary debates were added to the dataset later on.

Method

QCA or Qualitative Content Analysis is the primary analytical approach and method of data collecting, as previously stated above. The research design is inspired by the QCA method of analysis. Margrit Schreier's definition of Qualitative Content Analysis is the working definition used for this thesis. Schreier describes her take on QCA in her book *Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice* from 2012.

QCA was chosen due to nature of the raw data being parliamentary debates and news paper articles. The sheer number of articles written about the Brexit referendum and length of some of the parliamentary debates means the amount of pages resulting from the initial search resulted in a large amount of data, which needed to be structured and reduced. QCA lends itself well to dealing with the large amount of data in a systematic way that focuses on select aspects of the material. This help make the data more manageable by:

“Focusing on selected aspects of your material is what distinguishes QCA from many other qualitative methods for data analysis. On the one hand, selected aspects are less compared to the full, comprehensive meaning of a text. On the other hand, qualitative data are very rich anyway – so rich that it is impossible for all practical purposes to really capture their full meaning. Also, qualitative research tends to produce a lot of data.” (Schreier, 2012, p.4)

QCA is built around a coding frame and it is this coding frame that gives QCA its structure. QCA is a qualitative method but borrows elements from quantitative analysis “QCA is a method for describing the meaning of qualitative material in a systematic way. You do this by assigning successive parts of your material to the categories of your coding frame. This frame is at the heart of QCA, and it covers all those meanings that feature in the description and interpretation of your material.” (Schreier, 2012, , p. 1) The coding frame both opens up the material and excludes other parts of the texts. This helps narrow the analysis from the beginning. From a data set of hundreds of newspaper articles to under a couple of hundreds, but also focuses the analysis on specific aspects in the texts “(...), and in this process it reduces your material in two ways: In the first place, you do not take into account all the information provided by a case (be it a document, an

interview transcript, etc.). Instead, you limit your analysis to those aspects that are relevant with a view to your research question. Second, the categories of your coding frame will usually be at a higher level of abstraction than the more concrete information in your material.” (Schreier, 2012, p. 7). So while the data is reduced the interpretive level is elevated.

The coding frame, as the heart of the analysis, consists of main categories and sub categories, in the previous paragraph the three main categories for this thesis was outlined as economy, immigration and security, they were referred to as themes. Themes and main categories are used interchangeably here. The main categories in turn consists of sub categories, these are varying specifications of the main categories. The main categories are the aspects of the material that are of interest. The raw data or material is then read through the lens of the coding frame. Ensuring only the parts of the material relevant to the posed research questions are in focus: “Once you have specified the aspects which constitute your main categories, the next step is to identify what is said in your material about these aspects.” (Schrier, 2012, p.60) that is what the sub categories are for.

Creating the coding frame can be either deductive or inductive or both, as described in the research design, the coding frame here is inductive, build by looking at what is in the material in correspondence with the research questions. The phrasing of the research questions dictates an inductive created coding frame.

Even though QCA borrows elements from quantitative methods it is still a qualitative methods and as such does not allow for reproduction but of the very basics of the analysis to a certain extent; this is due ti the nature of qualitative methods “... because context is so important in qualitative research, it would not even be possible to exactly repeat a data collection process. Because the context has changed, the situation is no longer the same, and different questions might be appropriate. (Scherier, 2012, p. 26). As there is always a degree of personal interpretation, as Schreier says “Data never ‘speaks for itself’, it does not ‘have’ a specific meaning. Meaning is something that we, the recipients, attribute to the words that we hear or read, to the images that we see.” (Schreier, 2012, p. 2) this does not however mean that the analysis is not reliable or lacks validity. As with all methods there is a desire for reliability and validity of the ones work. Schreier

says that in QCA reliability and validity is measured differently than with other methods which are more wholly either quantitative or qualitative. Reliability can be accomplished by “Checking for consistency between coders or between different points in time is one way of assessing the reliability of your coding frame.” (Schreier, 2012, p.6) the way reliability is achieved in here is by coding the same material again at different times in the process of developing the final coding frame. This ensures consistency in coding “Because QCA always requires you to follow the same sequence of steps, regardless of your research question and your material, it is a very systematic method; and by being very systematic, QCA is also reliable.” (Schreier, 2012, p. 34)

Validity is tied together with reliability and the accuracy of the coding frame in relation to the research questions “Your coding frame can be regarded as valid to the extent that your categories adequately represent the concepts in your research question, and to achieve this you have to adapt your frame so as to fit your material. (Schreier, 2012, p.7)

Data

The primary data for this analysis consists of various newspaper articles from British newspapers and debates from House of Parliament, from both House of Commons and House of Lords. Both the newspapers and the articles were selected through criteria based on location, time and content. The parliamentary debates were selected based on time and content. These first criteria of selection were first and foremost a means to limit the dataset to a manageable quantity with relevance for the focus of the project. Subsequently more detailed criteria were applied in the coding phase by the selection of keywords pertaining to the research questions, as mentioned above.

The specifics of how the data was chosen will be explained below, even though the dataset consists of two types of text they are viewed and analysed as one set of data, as two sources dealing with the same topic and no difference is made when analysing. There were minor differences when collecting the newspaper articles and collecting the parliamentary debates, but they were mostly to do with the difference in nature of the two sources and the practicality of using different search engines, this will be specified below.

To find the newspaper articles I used the search engine LexisNexis® Academic, this was the most suitable search engine I had access to through the university. When using LexisNexis® Academic and you search result in over a tree thousand results the algorithm provides you with the top one thousand results ranked by relevance. Relevance, I assume, is based on the content of the search words and timeframe.

The search words used were “Brexit* AND EU*AND EUROPE*” with the timeframe between the 9th of June 2016 to the 23th of June 2016. The timeframe of two weeks were chosen at once arbitrary and based on the theory that there would be more coverage and discussions of Brexit closer to the referendum date.

The next step in reducing the one thousand and securing the best data material was to choose the newspapers to include:

- The Guardian (74 articles)
- The Scotsman (36 articles)
- The Times (34 articles)
- The daily Telegraph (28)
- The Sun (14)
- Daily Mail and mail on Sunday (7)
- The Herald (Glasgow) (7)
- The Mirror and The Sunday Mirror (6)

Then duplicates were weeded out. To further narrow it down specific article types and sections of the newspapers were chosen manually: Politics, opinions, features and editorials. This resulted in 69 articles. These types of articles are chosen because they express opinions and often more in-depth in the coverage and therefore allows for a more articulated view of the Brexit debate.

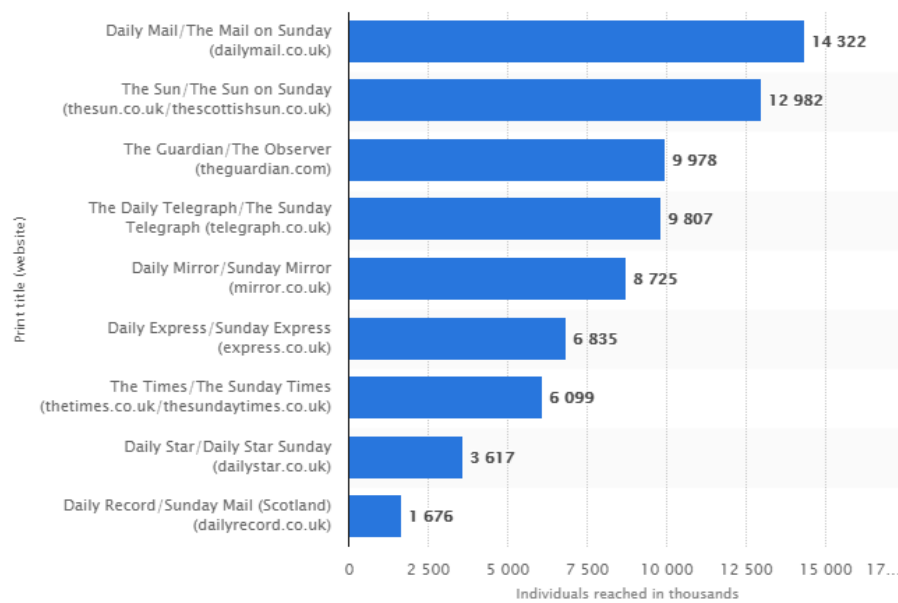


Figure 3, Monthly reach of national newspapers and their websites in the United Kingdom (UK) from October 2016 to September 2017 (in 1,000 individuals) (Source: @Statista, 2018a)²

Ensuring both sides of the political spectrum are represented in the data material is important, in order to ensure validity and for the findings to be of use. Therefore the newspapers were chosen on the basis of a quantitative and a qualitative criterion. Figure 3 and figure 4 above and below, respectively, show the combined reach of the leading newspapers and their websites from 2013 to 2017. The Daily Mail, the Guardian, the Telegraph and The Mirror consistently rank among the top five.

² This statistic has since been removed from @Statista's webpage.

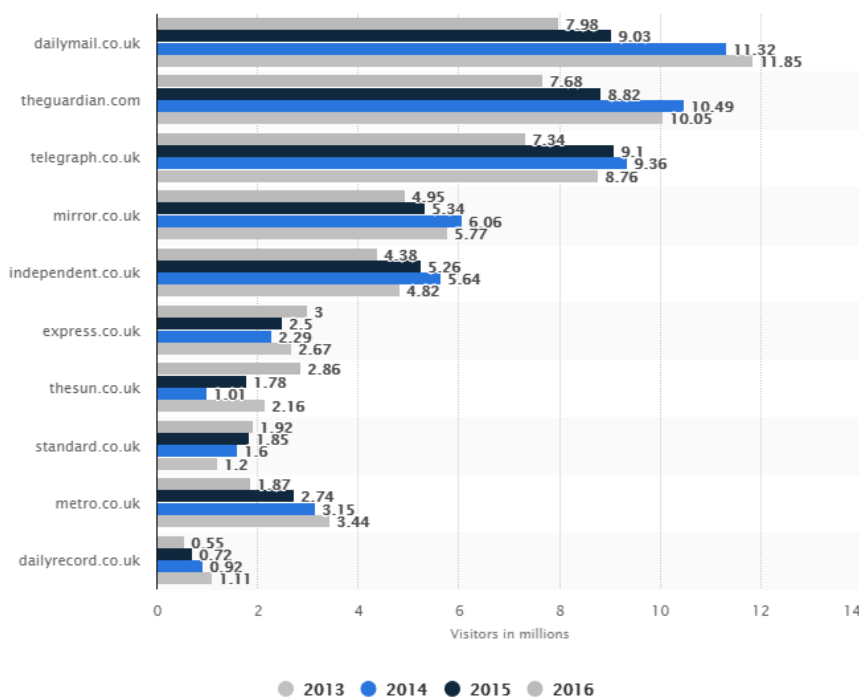


Figure 4, Newspaper websites ranked by monthly visitors in the United Kingdom (UK) from 2013 to 2016 (in million visitors) (Source: @Statista, 2018b)

The more people are reached by the newspapers, the more salient their opinions are and therefore they influence more people's decisions and in turn reflect the majority of the population and the national discourse. The media are independent actors and they influence the opinion making process in society; the concept of mediatisation will be clarified below in the theory section.

Both the Scotsman and The Herald have significantly less reach than the big British newspapers, as shown below.

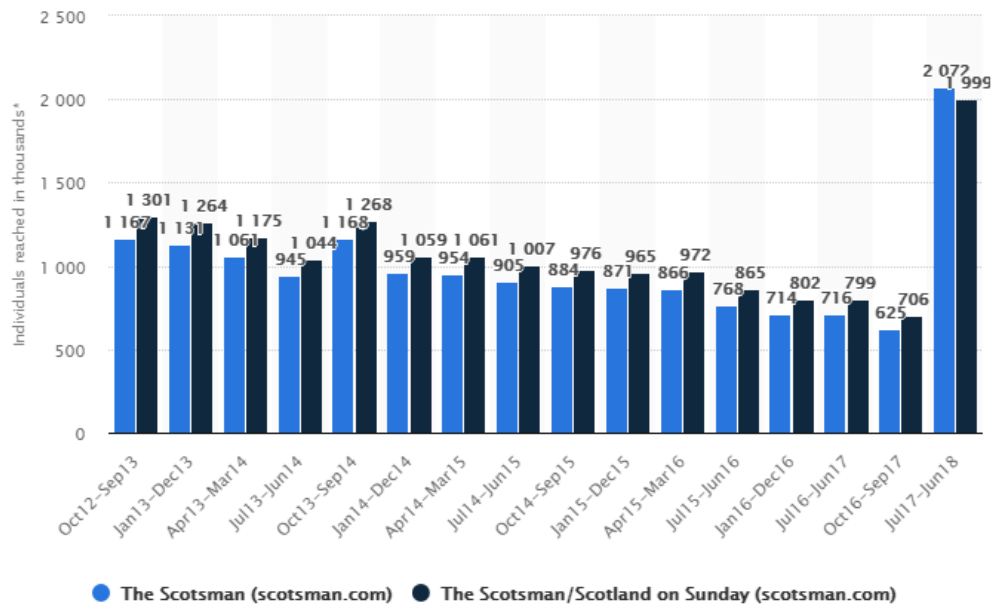


Figure 5, Monthly reach of The Scotsman and Scotland on Sunday in the United Kingdom (UK) from October 2012 to June 2018 (in 1,000s) (Source: ©Statista, 2018c)

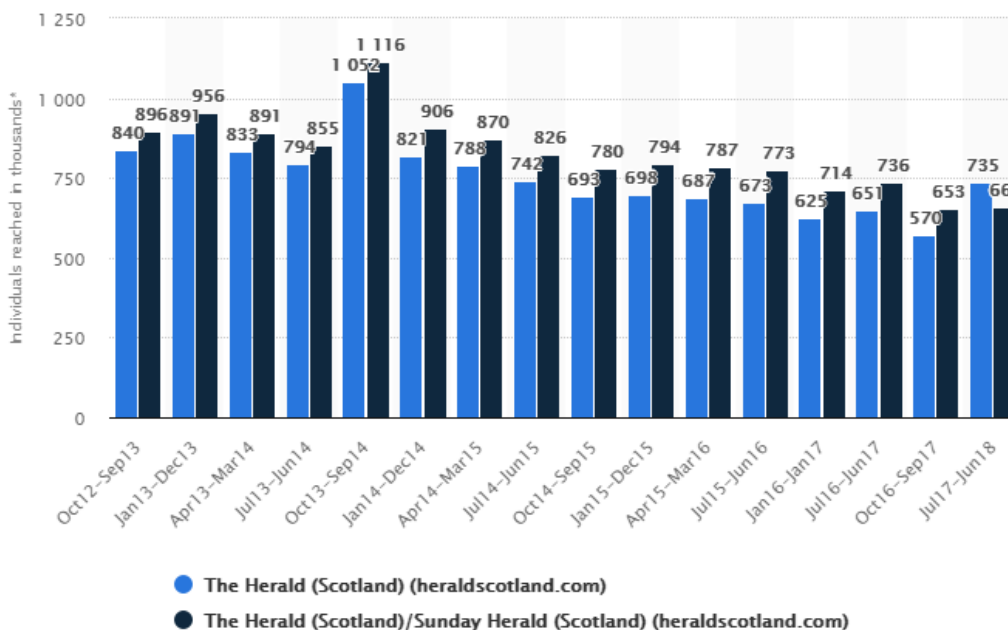


Figure 6, Monthly reach of The Herald and Sunday Herald in the United Kingdom (UK) from October 2012 to June 2018 (in 1,000s) (Source: ©Statista, 2018d)

However, they represent an important voice in the debate, namely the Scottish voice, Scotland are overall thought to be a lot more pro-EU than the rest of Britain and the referendum showed

clearly that Scotland wanted to stay in the EU with 62% voting for remaining in the EU (see statistic in the introduction). This leads to the qualitative aspect of the newspaper selection.

Newspapers from both sides of the political spectrum were chosen to ensure a representative data sample and the validity of data. Please reference figure 7 below, the figure shows how the British public perceive the political allegiance of the selected newspapers, using this figure to determine that both sides and the middle of British Politics are represented.

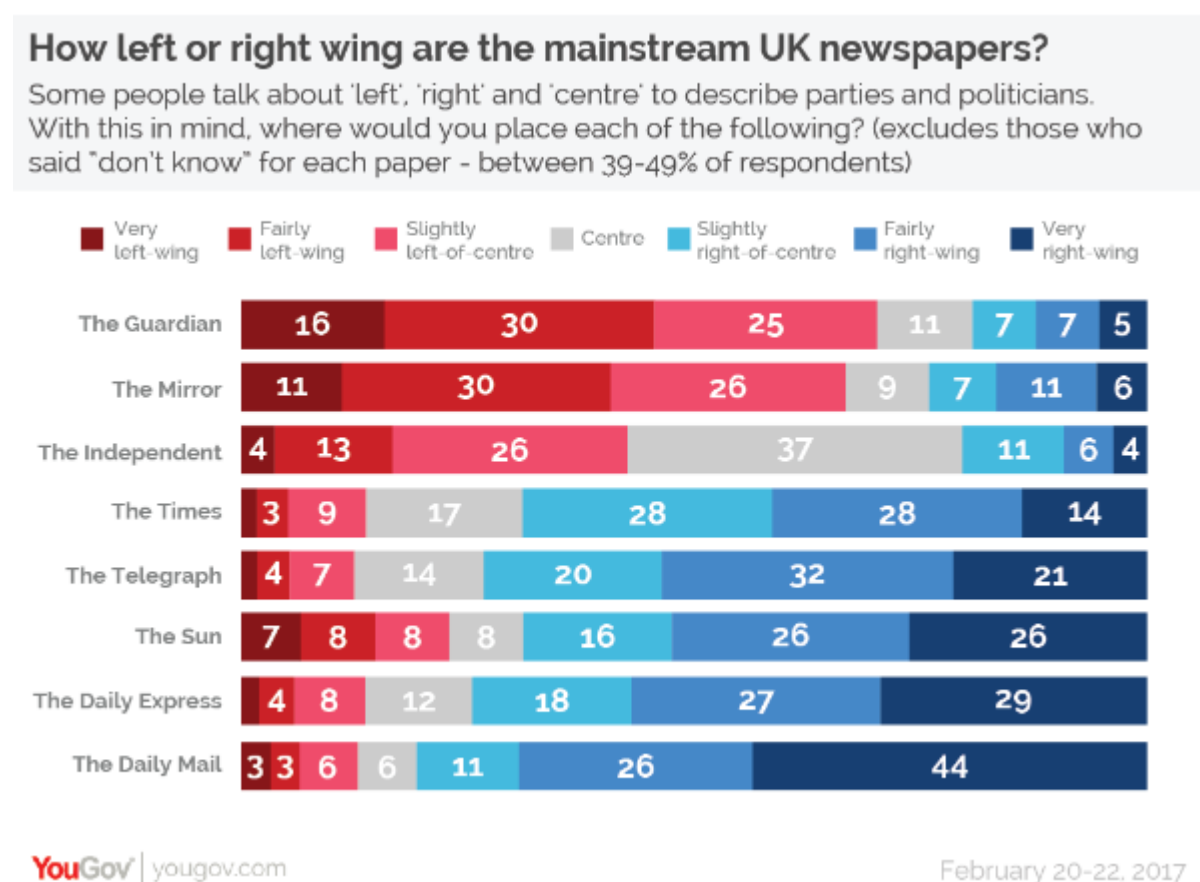


Figure 7, How left or right are the mainstream UK newspapers? (Source: YouGov, 2017)

The parliamentary debates were retrieved from the Hansard's webpage. The timeframe is from the 1st of June to the 23rd of June 2016, so slightly longer than the timeframe for the newspaper search. This is because there are many more articles than parliamentary debates about Brexit so to ensure a

sufficient sample size. The search words also differ slightly to only include “Brexit, EU” as this produced the best search, meaning debates only concerning the EU membership referendum were shown.

The debates were chosen from both House of Lords and House of Commons to give a representative data material. The initial search resulted in eighteen debates and after the preliminary coding and reading six debates were chosen, three from each chamber.

House of Lords:

- EU Referendum and EU reform (EUC Report) 15. June 2016
- Economy and Finance 9. June 2016
- EU Foreign and Security Strategy 7. June 2016

House of Commons:

- EU membership: Economic Benefits 15. June 2016
- Engagement 15. June 2016
- EU referendum 8. June 2016

It is a coincidence that there ended up being three debates from each chamber, each debate is of varying length and there is not an equal ‘amount of text’ from each chamber. This, however, does not present an issue for the analysis.

The six debates were chosen as they had the most references of the EU and the Brexit referendum and their content dealt directly with referendum and the consequences and discussions pertaining to it.

The reason for selecting newspaper articles and parliamentary debates as data material were to examine “...the structures within which ‘one’ has to argue about Europe. Those who define these structures are to a large extent leading political actors, that is, politicians and spokespeople from large social movements. It would thus be very unlikely that we would miss a dominant position if we examine the parliamentary debates, discussion programs on TV, the programmes distributed by parties and social movements, the debates in leading newspapers and books on European integration which have been part of the debate itself.” (Wæver, 2002, p.42). Looking at the public

debate will allow me to examine the forum where opinions are negotiated and expressed. As opposed to Wæver I will only be looking at select newspaper articles and parliamentary debates as it is not possible to encompass so much material for practical reasons. That of course results in some limitations. This means that the analysis and ensuing conclusions only pertain to this specific point in time, as indicated above, and is limited to only Brexit, as Wæver says “‘Covering’ a national discursive space is in principle impossible: one cannot read everything which has been written – or stated – within a debate as broad as the national debates on Europe.” (Wæver, 2002, p.42). I make no claim on all of British foreign policy positions, only as they were in 2016 up to the referendum.

Theory

In this chapter the theoretical framework for the project will be laid out and discussed along with definitions of the key concepts. The core of the project is the assumed interconnectedness between the national, in this case in the form of United Kingdom, and the supranational, here the European Union. And as such nationalism and national identity are the basis for the research and analysis. Further key concepts to be defined are framing and media theory, European identity. This is not a theory driven project, as mentioned earlier, but a data driven one these theories will be used in conjunction the empirical data findings.

Media theory, mediatization and framing

As Wæver said politicians and opinion makers define in what way policies regarding Europe and the European Union are talked about, as he says, they define the structures of the public debate. A debate which in large is played out in the media, who also are an active part of the debate. Stig Hjarvard says that the media has change from passively relaying information to be actively contributing to the debate and shaping it, “Contemporary society is permeated by the media, to an extent that the media may no longer be conceived of as being separate from cultural and other social institutions.” (Hjarvard, 2008, p.105). From this perspective the media and in this case newspapers are in a central position to influence the public debate through strengthening some views and exclude others. As Hjarvard puts it:

“A significant share of the influence media exert arises out of the fact that they have become an integral part of other institutions’ operations, while they also have achieved a degree of self-determination and authority that forces other institutions, to greater or lesser degrees, to submit to their logic. The media are at once part of the fabric of society and culture and an independent institution that stands between other cultural and social institutions and coordinates their mutual interaction.” (Hjarvard, 2008, p.106).

What is said and written in the media is of great importance but more important is how these things are framed. The media are in a special position to influence and express the opinions of the majority. Looking at how a subject such as Brexit is framed in the media is telling of the general position in society. Robert Entman point to a feedback loop between the politicians, the media and the public: “As with real-world cascading waterfalls, each level in the metaphorical cascade also makes its own contribution to the mix and flow (of ideas). Each can be thought of as a network of individuals and organizations, jostling to influence the political environment, and being affected by it in turn.” (Entman, 2004, Kindle Locations ³142-144)

³Kindle location is the same as a page reference, but as some of the books used are electronic kindle versions and they do not have regular page number but ‘kindle locations’ instead.

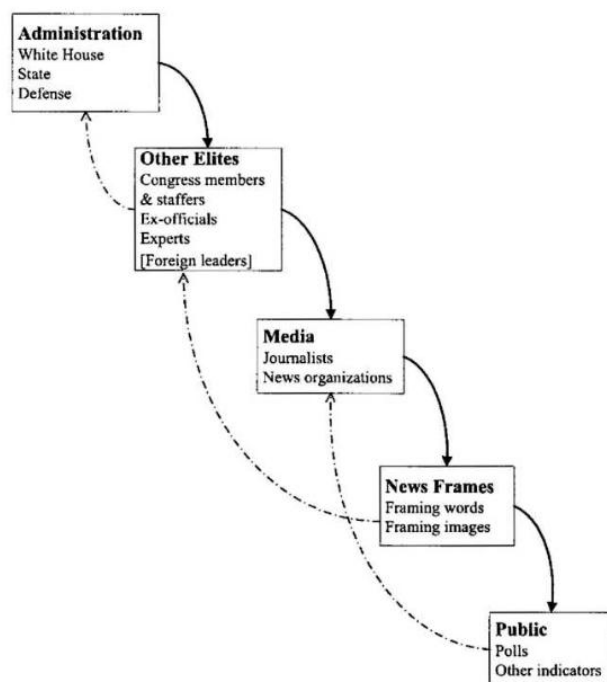


Figure 5, Cascading network activation (Source:

Robert Entman, (2004) *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign*, Kindle Location 142)

As the figure five shows there is a steady flow back and forth between the different actors in the public debate. Hjarvard refers to this position of the media in society as mediatization “...as defined here, means not only that the media play a role of their own determination, but that they at once have attained the status of independent institution and provide the means by which other social institutions and actors communicate. The media intervene into, and influence the activity of other institutions, such as the family, politics, organized religion, etc., while they also provide a ‘commons’ for society as a whole, that is, virtual shared fora for communication that other institutions and actors increasingly use as arenas for their interaction.” (Hjarvard, 2008, p.115).

Entman’s cascading model shows the media and the politicians to be on different end on the spectrum of influence or more correctly they have different positions in the same process of shaping the public debate, which is the reason for looking at both newspaper articles and parliamentary debates. The model also shows that both the media and the politicians as actors are engaged in framing. I will be using Entman’s definition of framing: “...the concept of framing consistently offers a way to describe the power of a communicating text... Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make

them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.” (Entman, 1993, pp. 51-52)

The themes and frames that appear throughout the data material are the ones which most likely, according to Entman are the most salient and influential. These frames uses images easily recognisable by the majority “The culture is the stock of commonly invoked frames; in fact, culture might be defined as the empirically demonstrable set of common frames exhibited in the discourse and thinking of most people in a social grouping” (Entman, 1993, p. 53) and “Those frames that employ more culturally resonant terms have the greatest potential for influence. They use words and images highly salient in the culture, which is to say noticeable, understandable, able, memorable, and emotionally charged. (Entman, 2004, Kindle Locations 107-108).

The Nation, the State and the Nation-state

Before talking about nationalism and national identity it seems best to start at the beginning and to first discuss what defines a nation, and the state, and in continuation; the nation-state. The latter is the primary modern political institution shaping the world and international relations. In relation to this analysis it is especially the concept of national sovereignty that is important as it relates to the relationship between Britain and the European Union.

The question of whether the nation is a modern phenomenon or dates back to ancient times is not the focus of this discussion. The debate between modernists, perennialists, primordialists and ethno-symbolists will therefore not be touched upon. However, the function and the makeup of the nation is the main focus of this section.

I will start out with Benedict Anderson definition of the nation as an imagined community, which is a broad definition of the nation, which focuses more on the scope of the nation and how it is experienced by the people living within it and not to much the content and function. Benedict Anderson defines the nation as: “it is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.” (Anderson, 2016, p.6) in his well-known book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of* from 1983. He lists four of the concepts in

his definition to further explain and for a better understanding of the nature of the nation; it being imagined, limited, sovereign and a community. He says the “It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow - members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.” (Anderson, 2016, p.6) He cautions against conflating imagined and created with fabricated and fake, in this definition it is important to distinguish between the two meanings, “(...) all communities larger than primordial villages of face - to - face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity / genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.”(Anderson, 2016, p.6). The nation is real and lives in the minds of the members even though, and because of, they will never come face to face with all the members included in the nation.

The next attribute concerns the scope of the nation and can be understood as both a physical and physiological description of the boundaries of the nation, that is that the nation is limited; “The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind.”(Anderson, 2016, p. 8). Within the imagined limits live the members of the nation with their fellow members, even though they may never meet or know even a tenth of them, and on the other side lives ‘the others’. Imagined limits are an expression of the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ and with it an inherent differentiation between in-group members and out-group members. Anderson says the nation is imagined as sovereign “because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely - ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm.” (Anderson, 2016, p.8) sovereignty is at the core of nationalism across the globe and one of the most associated traits. The conflicts that can erupt from this, the fight for independence, often makes the headlines and is associated with both peaceful and violent nationalism e.g. of newer date Scotland’s referendum for independence in 2014 and the Catalan vote both in 2014 and 2017 can be mentioned. The last trait Anderson mentions is that the nation is imagined as a community “because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited

imaginings.” (Anderson, 2016, p.8). Anderson does not, however, include in his definition any of the factors such as institutions or functions inherent in the nation, but his point of the nation being imagined as sovereign in the minds of the people is informing the analysis of this project. The argument is that sovereignty is at the heart of understanding the structures that determine how Brexit and the European Union is talked about in the public debate.

Anthony D. Smith describes the various definition of the nation as that of a spectrum; “Definitions of the concept of the nation range from those that stress ‘objective’ factors, such as language, religion and customs, territory and institutions, to those that emphasize purely ‘subjective’ factors, such as attitudes, perceptions and sentiments.” (Anthony D. Smith, 2010, Kindle Locations 342-344. According to him both those that emphasise the objective traits only often exclude some nations and reversely the ones that emphasise the subjective trait often include too many cases (Smith, 2010). He cites Benedict Anderson’s definition of the nation, as an imagined community, as an example of a subjective definition:

“Emphasizing sentiment, will, imagination and perception as criteria of the nation and national belonging makes it difficult to separate out nations from other kinds of collectivity such as regions, tribes, city-states and empires, which attract similar subjective attachments. The solution generally adopted has been to choose criteria which span the ‘objective– subjective’ spectrum. This strategy has yielded many interesting and useful definitions, but no scholarly consensus. Most students of the subject have, nevertheless, agreed on two points: a nation is not a state and it is not an ethnic community.” (Smith, 2010, Kindle Locations 352-357.)

As Smith point out a nation is not a state nor an ethnic community, although that does not clarify what a nation is by only saying what it is not. Anderson’s definition may be too open and thus include too many kinds of communities, nevertheless, his description of a community imagined in the minds of the members and the mutual belonging will form the theoretical understanding of a nation in this project. Still, taking Smith’s critique into consideration, his definition of a nation is “(...) ‘a named human community residing in a perceived homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a distinct public culture, and common laws and customs for all members’.” (Smith, 2010, Kindle Locations 382-384). As Smith lists the makeup of a nation he still agrees with

Anderson that a nation is still a “Nations, as we said, are felt and lived communities whose members share a homeland and a culture.” (Smith, 2010, Kindle Locations 360-361). Smith’s point that a nation is more than just the felt aspects but contains things such as a common language, history and laws which are also important unifying elements of a nations. And definitely things which people living the nation will point to as defining aspect of their nation and as such they constitute topics in debates that function as markers of either inclusion or exclusion.

Anderson is the way it is felt and his definition is somewhat more abstract than Smith’s and Guibernau’s which lean towards the specifics of what forms the nation, but perhaps more of what a nation-state is.

According to Guibernau one of the defining aspects of the nation-state is that the people belonging to it are citizens and not just members. Citizenship implies a legal and political contract “Citizenship acts as an entrance-card to a particular nation-state, since it designates equality of rights in term of civil, political and social rights.” (Guibernau, 2007, p. 62).

It is widely agreed upon that the nation-state is a modern political construct, the state is the law and political and educational institutions, “The nation-state is a modern political institution originating in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth century Europe. It is characterized by the formation of a kind of state which has the monopoly of what it claims to be the legitimate use of force within a demarcated territory, and seeks to unite the people subject to its rule by means of cultural homogenization.” (Geuibernau, 2007, p. 61)

Nationalism

Both Guiberau and Smith agree on that nationalism seeks to unify and is concerned with the nation above all other “Nationalism is an ideology that places the nation at the centre of its concerns and seeks to promote its well-being.” (Smith, 2010, Kindle Locations 298-299). But at Smith himself notes, this is vague description, the goal of nationalism is closely tied the definition of the nation as an imagined inherently limited and sovereign, therefore the goal(s) of nationalism is to promote or maintain these aspects through there generic goal“...: national autonomy, national unity and national identity, and, for nationalists, a nation cannot survive without a

sufficient degree of all three. This suggests the following working definition of nationalism: ‘An ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential “nation”.’” (Smith, 2010, Kindle Locations 300-303). The goals are generic as the character of nationalism depends on which political ideology it adheres to. As such it is important to be aware of the many facets of nationalism, nationalism is not one thing either perceived to be evil or perceived to be good but “The political ideologies to which nationalism is attached are crucial to understanding the significance and character of nationalism in each particular case. Above all, we should realize that the complexity, flexibility and great appeal of nationalism bare connected to its multifaceted character. Therefore, nationalism is sometimes associated with those who advocate xenophobia and ethnic cleansing, while in other in other cases it is applied to describe those who defend their right to exist and peacefully cultivate a particular culture which makes them ‘different’ from other groups.” (Guibernau, 2007, p. 177). Guibernau labels the damaging form of nationalism ‘non-idemocratic nationalism’ that is a nationalism that believes in the superiority of its members over and which seeks to dominate and exploit other not part of it and “tends to embrace political ideologies infused with authoritarian, dictatorial or fascist ideas.” (Guibernau, 2007, p. 178) but cautions to be conscious of the positive that people feel towards nationalism, that many feel the belonging as a good in itself and the felt shared solidarity give it value and is therefore meaningful to the members (Guibernau, 2007, p. 179). Nationalism remains a powerful force in modern politics.

National Identity

The concepts of nation, nation-state, nationalism and national identity are inherently linked together. Bearing in mind Anderson’s definition of an imagined community and Guibernau’s definition of the nation-state as the political institution ruling through cultural homogenization, by way of the present hegemonic culture, and nationalism is an ideology for maintaining and attaining sovereignty (Smith, 2010, Kindle Locations 300-303) and placing the nation as the centre for cultural and political life, then national identity can be defined, as Guibernau has done, as:

“...a collective sentiment based upon the belief of belonging to the same nation and of sharing most of the attributes that make it distinct from other nations. National

identity is a modern phenomenon of a fluid and dynamic nature. While consciousness of forming a nation may remain constant for long periods of time, the elements upon which such a feeling is based may vary.” (Guibernau, 2007, p.11)

Guibernau further implies that a national identity consists of five dimensions: a psychological, a cultural, a territorial a historical and a political dimension.

“The psychological dimension of national identity arises from the consciousness of forming a group based on the ‘felt’ closeness uniting those who belong to the nation.” Guibernau, 2007, pp. 11-12).

The cultural dimension is closely linked with psychological dimension. A shared language is important in the construction of a common identity as communication with your fellow national and “... a shared culture favours the creation of solidarity bonds among the members of a given community by allowing them to recognize each other as fellow nationals and to imagine their community as separate and distinct from others.” (Guibernau, 2007, p. 13) Both the psychological and cultural dimension encourages the ‘felt’ and ‘imagined’ bond forging connections with people you might otherwise feel connected to. Culture consists of an interconnected web of values, beliefs, customs, conventions, habits, languages and practices that are at once transmitted to other members and new members and at the same time internalized by the people within the culture (Guibernau, 2007, p. 13)

The territorial dimension is the literal land that the nation encompasses, the imagined homeland, “The landscape, be it urban or rural, also represent our heritage to future generations.” (Guibernau, 2007, p. 23)

The historical dimension is quite literally how ‘old’ a nation is, however, this history is used selectively by the members for “...providing members of a nation with a collective memory filled with transcendental moments in the life of the community ... makes us closer to our ancestors, and strengthens the subjective belief of being part of an extended family. (Guibernau, 2007, p. 20)

The political dimension of national identity derives from its relation with the modern nation-state... The political aspect of national identity, when applied to the nation-state, focuses upon those actions of the state destined to construct a cohesive society through a set of strategies

designed to generate a culturally and linguistically homogenous citizenry.” Guibernau, 2007, pp. 23-24)

The fluidity and flexibility of national identity along with its inherent ‘felt’ quality means that the dimension may be constant but what they encompass or how they are articulated may change over time as society changes and depend on the situation. Smith defines national identity along the same lines as he stresses the flexibility of national identity as “...the continuous reproduction and reinterpretation by the members of a national community of the pattern of symbols, values, myths, memories and traditions that compose the distinctive heritage of nations...” (Smith, 2010, Kindle Locations 507-510).

European Identity

“It is often claimed that there is no European identity which people would die for, like they have for national identity. This is a fake either/or: European identity is not important only if it outcompetes the national identities – and until then irrelevant. ‘Europe’ is important because of the way the national identities have been changed.”⁴ (Wæver, 2000, p.289)

As Wæver claims the important aspect of European identity, and perhaps also national identity when in connection with this analysis, is that the national identity have changed to take Europe into account. Wæver points to a connection between the national level and the supranational level as, he claims, identities are a discursive symbolic construction (Wæver, 2000, p. 89) and so are connected not exclusive of each other. Giddens also supports that argument as he defines European identity as being “...distinctive in this sense, that it must be cultivated in parallel with national cultures – themselves internally diverse and contested. As in the economic and political spheres, this is not a zero-sum game. The one identity does not ipso facto subvert the other.” (Giddens, 2008, p.221).

⁴ Original quote: “Det hævdes ofte, at der ikke er nogen europæisk identitet, som folk vil dø for, som folk har gjort det for national identitet. Dette er et falsk enten/eller: Europæisk identitet er ikke kun vigtig, hvis den udkonkurrer de nationale identiteter – og indtil da irrelevant. ‘Europa’ er vigtigt pga. den måde, de nationale identiteter er blevet omformet.” (Wæver, 2000, p.289)

That still leaves out how the European Identity is constructed and what it entails, According to Guibernau European identity is not based on the same elements as national identity, a reason for this is that the history does not unite in the manner it does on the national scale.

“...A still embryonic European identity relies on the shared consciousness of belonging to an economic and political space defined by capitalism, social welfare, liberal democracy, respect for human rights, freedom and the rule of law, prosperity and progress. In my view, these are the pillars of a European identity defined primarily by sharing of a specific political culture and the desire to benefit from the economic advantages derived from EU membership. “ (Guibernau, 2007, pp.115-116)

European identity is very ‘young’ and as such is not rooted in the same way but still remains an elite concept and even among elites there is a lack of cohesion “...not even the European elites share a coherent vision: rather, there exist substantial differences concerning their ideas about the institutions shape the EU should progress towards, as well as the degree of political and economic integration it should aim at.” (Guibernau, 2007, p.117) to a degree Giddens is seen to agree with Guibernau, though he argues the EU is a community with shared values instead of simply a space but a community “In my view, for the EU to flourish there must be something for citizens to belong to and that something must be a community. It is not accidental that through its various incarnations the EU has consistently called itself a community. A community can be cosmopolitan, and the EU certainly is so. It can and does involve generally shared values - readily identified in trans-European surveys. A community should have an overall sense of purpose, a rationale” (Giddens, 2008, pp.220-221).

Wæver argues that the focus should not be on the traditional self/other constellation but on ‘we/us’ concepts, as the ‘other’ is cast as someone/thing alien or an enemy to the self, ‘we the nation’, and then the focus becomes how ‘we the nation’ are alike or different from the other nation in EU, instead of “... on the way(s) one conceives the ‘we’ though the articulation of different layers of identity in complex constellations of competition and mutual definition.” (Wæver, 2002, p.25), but as Giddens say there will be inclusion and exclusions as that is the nature of a community, “A community has to have some principles of inclusion, and therefore of

exclusion. Boundaries are in some sense inevitable. There must be 'others' but it does not follow that relations with others have to be hostile or defined through antagonism. Good neighbours are just as much neighbours as bad neighbours are." (Giddens, 2008, p.221)

Analysis

Three themes emerged in the process of coding the data material: A theme where the debate constructed the Brexit referendum through an economic frame; a theme in which the debate was framed through an issue of migration and free movement; and at last a theme in which the debate was constructed through a frame about sovereignty. These three themes each have sub-categories that are aspects of the main theme. A red thread through all of the themes is a constant reference to economical and political loss and gain in the relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union, continually articulating a separation between the UK and the EU both among the leave and the remain side. A collective 'we/us' including both the UK and the EU never gains salience, beyond that what is expressed in a trade relationship based on what is seen as mutual beneficial. The 'we/us' remain a constellation of 'us, Britain' and 'us, Britain but with an articulated Scottish and/or Irish presence'. The most pervasive of the themes is the economy theme. The themes often overlap and an economic frame is often present alongside the other frames e.g. the job frame and the migration frame often exist in the same text.

The quotes are examples chosen because they best illustrate the theme in question and thus is just one or two of the many with the same meaning.

Economy

The Economy theme consists of three sub-categories, each concerning a different aspect of in what way the Brexit debate was structured in an economic frame. The three aspects are 'Continuing free-trade access to the single market', 'The cost-benefit relationship' and 'The importance of jobs'.

Continuing free-trade access to single market

This sub-category describes how the European single market and free-trade agreements were used in framing the Brexit debate in both the leave and the remain camp. Trade proved to be a cornerstone in the both sides argumentation on the nature of the continued relationship between The UK and the EU regardless of the outcome of the referendum.

Below, in hindsight, an extremely optimistic, pro-brexit quote from Chris Grayling, conservative politician and Secretary of State for transport, in the Mail on Sunday, this quote represent quite well the dominant frame on the pro-brexit side when talking about the economic consequences of a leave vote. The sentence “The first priority is talks on trade” summarizes the attitude towards the kind of relationship desirable to the UK, that the relationship should be like or perhaps more accurately an actual trade agreement. Limiting the interactions between the EU and the UK to only business arrangement, and one only enters in to a business agreement if one benefits from it financially.

“The Prime Minister’s position remains immensely important. It s why I have always said he must stay on in the event of a Brexit vote. He will play a vital role in maintaining stability in the markets, and his personal relationships with other EU leaders will be invaluable. Then the formal process begins. The first priority is talks on trade. Other EU countries may be upset, but they will come round in the end. Money and jobs are always a priority for politicians, and we are their biggest customer. European businesses will want to retain free-trade access to the UK - their biggest export market. One in five cars built in Germany is sold here. Thousands of French farmers produce food for the UK. In the end, it will be in everyones interests to agree a free-trade relationship. The formal period for the exit talks is two years. There is no reason why this should be difficult.” (Chris Grayling, 2016 June 19. Don’t Panic. *Mail on Sunday*)

That the interactions between the UK and EU should be that of trade is further cemented as the UK is cast in the role of customer “...and we are their biggest customer”. It could be argued that there is a ‘the customer is always right’ frame in play building on the UK as a customer, but also the European businesses, and the European politicians should provide good service to keep both

happy as in the end it will make their citizens happy through the job creation and money as “Other EU countries may be upset, but they will come round in the end. Money and jobs are always a priority for politicians, and we are their biggest customer.” (Chris Grayling, 2016 June 19).

In framing terms the quote reads as an evaluation of a proposed problem: that if the UK votes to leave the EU they will lose access to the single market and that will hurt the British economy.

But that will not happen as ‘everyone’ will be interested in maintaining a working free-trade relationship, seeing that UK is the ‘biggest export market’ and thus cast as indispensable for the European market. The UK’s importance for the European market is articulated as bigger than the reverses.

“European businesses will want to retain free-trade access to the UK - their biggest export market. One in five cars built in Germany is sold here. Thousands of French farmers produce food for the UK. In the end, it will be in everyones interests to agree a free-trade relationship.” (Chris Grayling, 2016 June 19). One could assume that it is not a coincident that Germany and France is used as examples, as they are the two biggest economies and political powers, and therefore lends credence to the argument by association.

The same argument for the need for access to the single market is present on the remain side but framed differently as a case of remaining in the EU to secure access which would otherwise be lost. The argument is made many times over and here by David Cameron, the Prime Minister at the time:

“I certainly share my hon. Friend’s concern. I well remember visiting his constituency and seeing what a thriving business location Lowestoft is. He is right that many companies come to Britain and invest in Britain for many reasons, but one of the most important is access to the single market of 500 million customers. Next week we have the opportunity to put our place in that single market beyond doubt, and I hope that we wake up on 24 June knowing that businesses are going to invest more in our country, create more jobs in our country and see more growth in our country, because that will help the families of our country. The unemployment figures today

show another welcome fall. We can see continued progress—let's keep our country moving forward. (Hansard, HC, 16 June 2016, col.1749)

The UK and EU is cast in reverse role in the two frames, the dependence relationship is flipped on its head. The customer is now represented by single market and in mentioning the potential economic power the single market hold in regards to the continuing economic growth of the British economy, Cameron ties the future of Britain together with continued membership of the European Union. Though, what ties them together is the financial prosperity the single market is seen to provide “many companies come to Britain and invest in Britain for many reasons, but one of the most important is access to the single market of 500 million customers... let's keep our country moving forward” (Hansard, HC, 16 June 2016, col.1749). This is as point Cameron makes throughout the debate (see full debate Hansard, HC, 16 June 2016, vol. 611 col. 1749-1760)

The cost benefit relationship

This sub-category describes in what way the cost and benefits concerning the EU membership were used as a frame in the Brexit debate. In this frames numbers are used as part of the argumentation, whether the numbers are factual or not is not relevant for the frame or the analysis. The focus is that the numbers are used as an argumentative strategy in an economic context to promote the economic benefit of EU membership or the financial cost of a continued membership. The core of this frame can be understood in terms of balance in the relationship between the UK and the EU; is there a perceived balance or imbalance? Is the EU taking advantage of the UK? This also goes to framing the nature of the EU or the perceived nature of the EU in the UK. It is worth noting that this theme is similarly to the previous and often overlap in understanding. The distinction is that the cost benefit relationship theme is not limited to a trade centred argumentation. The reason for having this theme is to show the nuances in the economic frame.

In the first quote the case for remaining in the EU is made with reference to both the loss of financial resources due to loss of EU grants and subsidies which will lead to loss of progress and crucial knowledge in the health sector. It is possible to talk of an intellectual and economical loss along with the lost jobs which in the case of Brexit would be the EU's gain. And Britain would then have to compete with the EU in a disadvantage state.

“The UK is a world centre for health and medical research. To a large extent this is the result of the substantial EU research budget. We receive substantially more research funding from the EU (16% of the whole) than the 11% that we pay in. Brexit would result in a substantial downgrading of UK health research, prolonging the wait periods for development of new treatments and pharmaceutical products. The single market has also allowed our country to become the centre of the pharmaceutical industry. The centralised EU system for licensing new products is based in London at the European Medicines Agency. After a Brexit it would move to another European country, taking many of our pharmaceutical firms with it.” (Birt, C., 22 June 2016, The Guardian)

As this position supports remaining in the EU and therefore supports the EU, it is important to note that the EU is cast in a providing role. That the EU actually gives more back than it gets from the UK.

The complete opposite can be said for the next quote, which represents the argument that the EU takes from Britain and on top of that is unfair in its dealings with Britain. In a way that purposely puts Britain at a disadvantage.

“One of Britain's best-known companies warned staff last night its future could be threatened if the country remains in the EU. The sugar giant Tate & Lyle wrote to its 800 UK staff warning that EU restrictions and tariffs' had added £30million to its raw material costs last year. This turned what should have been a good profit, that we would all share, into a £19million loss'. The company's senior vice-president Gerald Mason told staff that EU tariffs on a single boatload of cane sugar could top £2.5million. He said the situation was made worse by the fact that Brussels officials then send that money to subsidise our beet sugar-producing competitors in Europe'.” (Groves, j., 22 June 2016, Daily Mail)

The EU is cast as taking from the UK and even worse giving British money to European competitors. The UK-EU relationship is framed at a distorted, with EU possibly favouring European, its own, producers. This suggests that the UK does not identify as a part of the EU community. This frame also concerns the price of EU membership and the division in regards to whether it is worth

paying; that the UK does not get its money worth, on this, as demonstrated above, are two competing discourses.

The importance of jobs

This sub-category illustrates how jobs were used as a frame in the Brexit debate in relation to the economic implications. The argument that EU membership is vital to maintaining and creating jobs and that exiting the EU would have grave implication in the form of rising unemployment, this frame is mainly used by the remain side.

EU is framed as a facilitator and creator of future jobs and investment in the UK as Lord Shipley, from the Liberal democrats, says in the House of Lords:

“...our prospects are grim if we leave the European Union. We are one of the world’s largest economies, but we are so because we are in the European Union, not because we are outside it. The north-east of England is a manufacturing and exporting region. Many thousands of jobs—around 150,000 in the north-east of England and millions across the UK—depend on exporting to our European partners. Leaving the *EU*’s single market, which is the world’s largest free trade zone, would hit our trade and investment and increase unemployment.... The north-east of England simply cannot afford the cost of *Brexit*. It would be a massive own goal disrupting our economy and the livelihoods of very many households. Why would an overseas company seeking to expand in the *EU* want to put itself outside the single market, facing tariff barriers to its exports?” (Hansard, HL, 9 June 2016, col. 834)

With that quote linking both previous and future British economic growth with a future in European Union membership. The north-east is the traditional industrial centre of England, therefore referring to it stresses the job crisis that a leave vote would bring.

The frame implies that the EU is responsible for the progress; the continued economic corporation is vital in attracting non-UK and also non-EU investors, if the UK leaves the overseas investors will leave with them, therefore “...a close and cooperative relationship with Europe was essential in order to further Britain’s interests ... What Britain could no longer alone could be compensated for, partly, through Europe...” (Larsen, 1997, p.64)

(For similar argumentation see also John McDonnell, Hansard, HC, 15 June 2016, col. 1765).

McDonnell is a labour MP and framed the EU debate as an unemployment issue “...Let us be absolutely clear: this is about jobs. There are 3.5 million jobs directly dependent on Britain’s membership of the *EU*. These will be put at risk as a result of a Tory *Brexit*...*EU* member countries accounted for nearly half of the UK’s stock of inward investment at £496 billion. This is far more than the US or any other single country...” (Hansard, HC, 15 June 2016, col. 1765) It is of note that EU is being placed over the US, pointing to the relationship with EU being more important for the future of Britain. The frame implies that Britain should not shift focus from the EU to other possible partners, as EU cooperation should take precedence.

There is a focus on class which implies that some parts of British society will feel the impact of a Brexit more acutely than other, illustrated by Carolyn Harris, labour MP, and David Cameron exchange in a House of Commons debate: “...Does the Prime Minister agree that leaving the EU would hit hard-working families the most by raising the cost of living, and that it is too big a risk to take? [David Cameron:] The hon. Lady is right. It is always the poorest and those with the least who get hit hardest if an economy suffers a recession.” (Hansard, HC, 15 June 2016, col.1755)

The threat of recession and unemployment for the working class hints at austerity budgets and conjures up the spectre of working class poverty under Thatcher in 1980s and the strict austerity budgets of the time, a hard time for the country’s working-class families as noted by Jeremy Corbyn, Labour party leader, in the same debate:“...We would oppose any post-Brexit austerity Budget, just as we have opposed each austerity Budget put forward by this Government...” (Hansard, HC, 15 June 2016, col. 1753)

Gordon Brown in *The Scotsman* argued that the future of job creation is inextricably linked to a future in Europe:

““I am speaking directly to the economically-insecure or the anxious millions' - the millions of mothers and fathers worried about their children's future, the millions of workers worried about their own future and the millions of young people worried about their country's future - and will explain how remaining part of the EU can

enhance their security and deliver opportunity in the years to come."My message is that if we want to create more jobs, better-paid jobs, and higher quality jobs, there is no road to the future that does not go through Europe." Mr Brown will say that "evidence shows that up to 500,000 jobs in Britain will be created by the expansion of the single market as it becomes the biggest job creator of the next decade".

(Buessy, k. 21 June 2016, The Scotsman)

This is not to imply a relationship of any other nature than an economic one is desired in this frame.

(The difference between the European Union and Europe, the continent, is not always clear and the two terms are often used interchangeably.)

Economy Conclusion

Henrik Larsen describes the British attitude towards EU quite well when he says:

"In the dominant discourse in the 1980s, as in the 1960s and 1970s, Europe was not seen as an organic community or a civil association to which Britain naturally belonged because of a common culture...The primary motivation for action on the European stage was practical and instrumental, and sometimes 'Europe' even had negative connotations. Cooperation was legitimized in terms of fulfilment of concrete interests for Britain." (Larsen, 1997, p. 55)

The attitude towards EU membership does not appear to have changed much at the core, though EU is looked upon more favourable, especially when it comes to trade, which is seen as necessary but whether membership is needed to achieve it divides the waters. In the overall dominant economic frame the UK relates to the EU because of concrete economic interest, the EU have something the British need namely access to the European consumer, as "fulfilment of concrete interest for Britain" (ibid, 1997, p. 55) though it should be noted that in a scientific and academic setting there seems to be an interest in EU membership beyond the purely economical aspect and towards one of knowledge-sharing for the sake of progress, but this is a small outlier position. The nuances are important of cause in regards to the argument being pro-Brexit or not, but it is more significant that the arguments were framed in an economic way. That the way EU membership is

talk about is through economic terms on both sides. Because this is a referendum and as with any other vote there are two opposing sides and they have the opposite opinions of each other but both sides express themselves through the same structure with regards to economy, the need for access to the single-market, when talking about the European Union.

Migration and free-movement

Frames where free-movement and migration are the weighted in proportion to other frames that might also be present. Often more than one frame is present in the same text and regularly overlaps or work in conjunction with each other, this is especially the case with migration and free-movement and economic frames as mentioned previously and migration and sovereignty. There are two sub-categories informing this theme, 'Wages and migrants' and 'Control'

Wages and migrants

The two competing frames on migration and the free-movement of labour are among the most divisive in the debate. They have completely different view on the quality of the effect it has on the British society in general and the local communities in particular.

The remain side frames migration and free-movement of labour as positive for the British society and the negative effects such as wage-cutting should and can be better fought by remaining in the EU, so as the union across the European Union stand together and help each other:

“(...) for trade unions, control of the labour supply in an industry or across society has always been the core of our mission, to ensure that workers get a fair share of the wealth they create. But pulling up the drawbridge against the rest of Europe is the wrong answer. The right answer is the same one we used when migrants from Ireland were vilified in the last century; when Jewish immigrants were targeted a century ago; and when Asian and African-Caribbean workers were attacked in the 1950s, 60s and beyond. That is, strong trade unions delivering the rate for the job, whoever you are and wherever you come from. Leaving the EU will not stop the supply of cheap labour to Britain. Those who profit from wage-cutting found a way to import cheap labour without the EU in the past, and will do so again. The idea that leaving the EU is a shortcut to social justice is a cruel con-trick by the right wing of the Tory party. Some argue that such workers' rights as we have secured did not come as a gift from Brussels, but were the result of union campaigning. That is true -

but surely they can best be defended and extended by working in unity across borders, rather than each isolated in our own country, turning our back on trade unions abroad.” (McCluskey, L., 21 June 2016, *The Guardian*.)

Talking about the harassment, and implicitly stated the racism, migrant workers has been subjected to through the different waves of immigration in British history, McCluskey is drawing parallels to how the debate is conducted today. Both prior and while in the EU wage-cutting happened and will happen, EU is framed not as a facilitator of undermining the labour market but the facilitator for a different kind of union to combat wage-cutting. The frame does not vilify migrant but treats them like workers on equal footing with non-migrant workers. The way to fight (the remedy implied in the framing) the social injustice lies in uniting workers so that “whoever you are and wherever you come from” (McCluskey, L., 21 June 2016, *The Guardian*.) you get the right pay. There is a prominent ‘class-fight’ element to the frame when saying “Those who profit from wage-cutting found a way to import cheap labour without the EU in the past, and will do so again” (McCluskey, L., 21 June 2016, *The Guardian*.) suggesting the jobs that migrants a getting are lower-wage jobs and that someone higher on the social latter is profiting.

The leave side’s framing stresses the negative cultural aspect of migration:

“Andrea Leadsom, the energy minister, said she believed that immigration had enriched society until 2002, when eastern Europe countries acceded to the EU and their citizens were able to move and work in the UK. "It's the speed and the volume and the inability to hit the ground running," she said. "If you come here and you don't speak English, and you don't know the customs and you don't know where to live and you don't have a job - It's really difficult for everybody. It's really difficult to make you welcome." ... "My family lived in Portugal for 10 years, I love the Germans, I love Swedish food, I speak French. I love Europe," she said. "What I hate is the EU and the way it is destroying such a fabulous continent." The minister argued that there was now a "fundamental problem" with immigration. "In my own area of Northamptonshire, people write to me saying: 'I walk down the shopping street in Northampton and I don't hear any English spoken'," said Leadsom.” (Asthana, A., Mason R., 14 June 2016, *The Guardian*)

Leadsom makes the distinction between the EU and Europe in her argumentation but also pointing to the 2002 expansion of the EU to include eastern European countries, saying that it is 'the speed and volume' that prevent good integration of the Eastern European immigrants. Implied in the frame is that EU is responsible for the UK having to accommodate a too large amount of migrant, which in turn is harming the UK. It is significant to note how Leadsom says migration negatively impacts the UK, she points to language and customs, among other things, two aspects that according to both Smith and Guibernau (2007, p.11-13) are central to national identity. This combined with the deliberate singling out of Eastern European immigrants suggest they are framed as 'the other' and therefore they pose a risk to British national cohesion.

Control

This sub-category explores how the frame of controlling immigration is realised through control over access to welfare benefits. This implies that the reason for immigration is the UK's welfare system and therefore uncontrolled immigration presents a risk to the economy. This problem is best solved within the EU as leaving would be an even greater risk to the economy. At the same time less EU integration is desired.

In a debate in the House of Commons David Cameron links UK's welfare benefits with migration and says by controlling when access is granted, immigration can also be controlled:

"In terms of funds to help communities impacted by migration, we have a pledge in our manifesto that we are looking forward to bringing forward, which is a controlled migration fund to make sure that we put money into communities where there are pressures. Of course there are some pressures and we do need to address them, and I am happy that we will be able to work on a cross-party basis to do that. As I have said many times, there are good ways of controlling migration, and one of them is the important rules we are bringing in so that people do not get instant access to our welfare system, but there are bad ways of controlling immigration, and leaving the single market and wrecking our economy is certainly one of them." Hansard, HC, 15 June 2016, col. 1750-1751)

When Cameron saying that one way of controlling immigration is to make sure immigrants does not get access to the welfare system right away he is also saying there are problems in the EU with

people coming to a new country just to take advantage of the economic benefits available and that this needs to be stopped. But the single market, which is again, referred to as critical for the UK's economy, makes up to the perceived exploitation. It is iterated that the desired UK-EU relationship is symbolised by the single market.

Greg Hands, The Chief Secretary to the Treasury, also supports remaining in the EU though on British terms:

“...I want us to remain, and I say that as someone who is not blind to the faults and the flaws of the European Union. Being critical of the EU does not mean wanting to leave the EU; it means wanting to keep enjoying all the benefits it has to offer while continuing to fight for the best interests of the UK in Europe. If we choose to stay, we can have the best of both worlds. We will never be forced to join the euro, and the deal struck by the Prime Minister in February means that our rights as a country outside the eurozone will be protected, as my hon. Friend the Member for Bromley and Chislehurst (Robert Neill) said. We will have no membership of Schengen, no ever-closer political union, greater control over welfare and greater control over the pull factors for migration.” (Hansard, HC, 15 June 2016, col.1864)

This quote could combines control with migration and their access to public welfare and benefits with the desire to retain a high degree of sovereignty and limiting European Union integration, opting out of the various EU initiatives for greater coherence among the member states.

The consensus seems to be; the European Union is flawed but remaining in it on ‘our terms’ is the best way to secure Britain.

Migration and free-movement conclusion

Two competing arguments both employing a migration and free-movement frame. Quite simply put one side frames migration and free-movement as positive and that is has been and will continue to be a boon for Britain if, and the ‘if’ is important, there is some form of control to ensure Britain, and the welfare system, is not being taken advantage of. But the control is best

realised within the European Union and with the support of EU, but not through EU integration. However, it holds connotation of 'better the devil you know, than the devil you don't'.

The other frame holds that migration and free-movement has harmed the UK in concerns to driving down wages, negatively impacting the local communities by not integrating, here illustrated by not speaking English in public and not knowing British customs. And Migrants are framed as a potential treat to British national cohesion.

Sovereignty

Sovereignty or perhaps more the loss of sovereignty is the focus of this sub-category. How the EU has cost the UK in sovereignty that has been transferred to Brussels. The Sub-category of 'security' is an outlier, in that it highlights how membership of the EU facilitates better security for keeping the UK safe, protection of the country is the responsibility of the state and therefore a key sovereign issue which makes this framing stand out.

Democratic deficit and Bureaucracy

There is dissatisfaction with the EU on both sides of the referendum; both sides see the European Union as a treat to the sovereignty of the UK, the EU's amassing bureaucracy, lack of transparency and an overall democratic deficit, Guibernau says that the 'no' vote in France and the Netherlands in 2005 to the draft constitution showed "Dissatisfaction with the EU's democratic deficit, concern about the future of social welfare, disagreement on the institutional model..." (Guibernau, 2007, p. 117) this observation holds true in regards to the UK.

The difference is the solution to the perceived problem and the nature of the EU.

John McDonnell (Labour) in favour of remaining in the EU:

"A strong reform agenda is needed to ensure that where sovereignty has been pooled in decision making, there is democratic accountability. That means making decisions in the EU completely open and transparent, and ensuring that the Commission is effectively democratically accountable." (Hansard, HC, 15 June 2016, col. 1771)

McDonnell acknowledges that there is an issue with lack of transparency and democratic accountability, but frames it as a seat at the table will give you power to reform that. EU is not inherently and deliberately being undemocratic. The use of the line 'where sovereignty has been pooled' reaches back to a 1980's discourse in labour which endorsed "a close and cooperative relationship with Europe ... Britain would further its interests better through a 'pooling of sovereignty'" (Larsen, 1997, p. 64)

Steve Double (Conservative) represents the leave side, framing EU as meddling and unfair:

"According to the House of Commons Library, in 2016 Britain is forecast to give £20.5 billion gross and £11.2 billion net to the EU, so we will be getting back some money from that £20 billion. No one can deny that that will be a large sum of money, and there are various opinions about how it could be spent, but only if we leave will we get to decide how it can be apportioned. that over the past 10 years or so Cornwall has received around £600 million in economic development aid. But we need to remember that that is not EU money. The EU does not actually have any money—there is no magic EU money tree. It is our money, which we give to the EU. It converts it into euros, then converts that into sterling to give back to us, except that it gives it back with a whole load of strings, bureaucracy and red tape attached about how we can spend it. ... How we should spend it is dictated, Big Brother fashion, by the EU." (Hansard, HC, 15 June 2016, col.1844-1845)

The EU is almost framed like a scam, they take the UK's money and then they give some of it back and pretend it is service all the while telling the UK how to spend it. This indicates that the EU is not only taking money that does not belong to them, they are also making decisions on behalf of the UK and in doing so taking away some sovereignty. Leaving the EU is framed as the logical choice of 'why not keep all of the money, then we have more to spend and no one to interfere', a frame of we know better than 'them'.

Security

In this Sub-category the way in which EU is articulated in regards to security is explored. National security is traditionally seen as the domain of the state and therefore a symbol of sovereignty. Here though there is the first example of a desire to form an extended relationship with the EU

that does not have an immediate economic nature. I only found this frame in the remain camp and only in the parliamentary debates, this could point towards it being an elitist project, elitist understood as the opposite popular.

Illustrated by this exchange between Vernon Coaker (Labour) and Ben Wallace, The parliamentary Under-Secretary of states for Northern Ireland:

“During his discussions with the Northern Ireland parties, has the Minister said whether he thinks that it would help the police if we left the European Union, given that, before the introduction of the European arrest warrant, extradition took, on average, a year rather than the 48 days that it takes now, and given that 162 criminals have been removed from Northern Ireland since 2009 through the use of the arrest warrant?

Mr Wallace

The hon. Gentleman is absolutely correct. The ability to remove people whom we do not want so that they face trial elsewhere in Europe is a very powerful tool for our forces of law and order in Northern Ireland. We have deported 190 people to face trial, including terrorists from Spain, and we have managed to bring back 34 people to face justice in the United Kingdom. That is a tool that we need: it keeps people safe in Northern Ireland and in the United Kingdom as a whole, and to turn our backs on it would be foolish.” (Hansard, HC, 08 June 2016, col. 1176)

The way this is framed means it does not encroach on the sovereignty of the UK, the police arrangement is ‘a tool’ in the hands of the British law enforcement. A tool is passive and only becomes active when used which means the UK is in control.

In a debate in the House of Lords Baroness Suttie (Liberal Democrats) expanded on this security relationship:

“first and foremost, the new global strategy should produce an effective response to the challenges and threats on our borders which are now having a direct effect on all member states, not just the United Kingdom...The idea peddled by the leave

campaign that somehow, if we remove ourselves from the European Union, we will also be able to remove ourselves from these global crises and challenges on our borders is frankly absurd. It is also wholly dishonest to the British people. Faced with such challenges, it is dishonest to suggest that if we pull up the drawbridge everything will be okay, and that Britain in splendid isolation will somehow be better equipped to deal with these global challenges on our own.... I fear that if we do not work to find effective solutions together, the rise of populism and nationalism across the EU could threaten the very peace that the EU has so successfully helped to achieve on our continent.” (Hansard, HL, 07 June 2016, col. 600-700)

Here the treats faced are not just from within the EU but global threats and they cannot all be solved by the law enforcement. Also of importance is the reference to EU as a peace keeping project, part of the original intention with the EU (EEC then). The frame of ‘Europe in danger from rising populism and nationalism’ hints at the past with two world wars, *if*, the EU and the UK does not work together. The EU and the UK need each other.

Sovereignty conclusion

“The strong symbol of this British union therefore became the sovereign parliament, and by the token, it can be said that other centres of political power competing with Westminster were seen as threatening the key symbol of the unique identity of the British state” (Gamble 1985: in Larsen 1997, p. 39) Economic gain in constantly weight against loss of sovereignty. The EU’s perceived democratic deficit, in the optic of the remain, is in large part due to the lack of transparency, and Britain should take the role of leader by example to reform the EU.

The Leave side sees the EU’s bureaucracy as a symbol of its undemocratic ways and as a waste of money.

Conclusion

- *How are the different ‘we/us’ categories defined? And what is the focus of the narratives of these categories?*

A collective 'we/us' including both the UK and the EU never gains salience, beyond that what is expressed in a trade relationship. The 'we/us' remain a constellation of 'us, Britain' and 'us, Britain but with an articulated Scottish and/or Irish presence'. There are smaller 'we/us' categories of 'us in a union/the workers' but this never spreads and take hold and also it never form a political presence that could threaten parliament.

The narratives are of an imbalance in relation to influence and economic profit and depending on which side, remain or leave, the answer is reformed EU with Britain as perhaps an instigator as the single market is the key to investment, jobs and prosperity or no more EU.

- *To what extent did sovereignty play a role in the debate?*

The United Kingdom first and foremost understands themselves as sovereign and as a nation-state. Therefore, as Larsen says “, it can be said that other centres of political power competing with Westminster were seen as threatening the key symbol of the unique identity of the British state” (Gamble 1985: in Larsen 1997, p. 39). The EU, without reforms for democratic transparency, instigated by the UK, is perceived to be encroaching upon the sovereignty of the UK parliament.

The remain side weighs the cost and benefit on everything from being part of the EU against the 'pooling of sovereignty' and the economic benefit to the UK. For the leave side the loss of sovereignty will always be too high and EU too undemocratic.

This paper seeks to investigate in what way the European Union is articulated in regards to the United Kingdom in the referendum debate, both explicit and implicit, with a focus on national identity. And what kind of relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union, if any, would the United Kingdom pursue?”

EU is seen as a way to economic prosperity through the single market, to quote Guibernau “...a European identity defined primarily by sharing of a specific political culture and the desire to benefit from the economic advantages derived from EU membership.”(2007, p.116)

The United Kingdom wants an economic trade agreement. The single market symbolises the kind of relationship the UK is interested in. They have no interest in becoming integrated in the European community as represented by the European Union. They are interested developing an

intelligence-exchange relationship as showed previously in the theme sovereignty, as a way to keep Britain safe by being able to deport unwanted European criminals to face trial in their own country. It can be said of both these relationships that they are characterised by a quid pro quo attitude, the UK will peruse a relationship of cooperation with the EU as long as it is within their interest and does not circumvent their sovereign Parliament. Other relationships such as academic knowledge-sharing and trade union relationships with EU counterparts are also desirable but they are not widely present in the debate and they are not of such a political nature that they ever infringed upon the sovereignty of parliament.

The leave side wants the same relationship based on economic benefits but in contrast to the remain side, the leave side only wants access to the single market through a separate trade agreement with the EU and have none of the obligation or limitation that come with being part of the single market.

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