



# LUND UNIVERSITY

Master of Arts in European Studies

*To be, or not to be in the EU  
that is the question*



**The Cultural Case of United Kingdom's Possible Withdrawal from EU**

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Master Thesis for Lund University  
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*To my parents and grandparents for their wonderful and unconditional support.*

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## Master Thesis in European Studies

**Title:** “To be, or not to be” in the EU, that is the question  
– The cultural case of United Kingdom’s possible withdrawal from EU

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### Abstract

#### Background

While culture “stresses social life as such: individuals in their relations to others”<sup>1</sup>, this thesis paper deals with *culture* alongside notions of values, beliefs and national preference/interest. The cultural aspect will shed into light by a wider perspective – the influence it has among *European Union’s* social and political life. Within EU, the United Kingdom holds high gains and strong financial power as one European member; yet, for the first time in the last decades, the British government decided that – one renegotiation is needed between the UK-EU relation.

#### Aim

The aim of this dissertation paper is to investigate whether there is a linkage between culture and governmental decisions/EU politics. Thus, United Kingdom is chosen as a particular study case determining to what extend the British values and beliefs have an impact over UK’s possible withdrawal from EU.

#### Method

A mixed research method of discourse analysis together with survey analysis has been used; both attaining significant results of the cultural spectrum across EU political arena.

#### Theoretical framework

A broad perspective over EU politics and EU cultural spectrum will be investigated in the third chapter, thru two main theories in the field – Liberal Intergovernmentalism and Social Constructivism. In the following two chapters the notion of ‘culture’ will be defined; also its importance will be discussed in relation to the Union.

#### Conclusion

The final chapter of this master thesis comprehends one general conclusion made on the basis of the gathered material and findings. Lastly, a discussion will be drawn from how the research process has been undertaken.

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<sup>1</sup> Baldwin, J. R., Faulkner, S. L., Hecht, M. L., and Lindsley, S. L. – *Redefining Culture – Perspectives Across the Disciplines*, (2006), 7

“Culture is something that Western societies have not clearly understood, so that the challenges they have to face in an increasingly multicultural world are particularly difficult to manage. Understanding culture is certainly not only a Western problem, but a universal problem as well.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Quotation of Mantovani Giuseppe – *Exploring borders: Understanding culture and philosophy*, Routledge, Philadelphia (2000), in Baldwin, J. R., Faulkner, S. L, Hecht, M. L., and Lindsley, S. L.- *Redefining Culture – Perspectives Across the Disciplines*, (2006)

### **List of Abbreviations**

CDA – Critical Discourse Analysis

EU – The European Union

LI – Liberal Intergovernmentalism

SEM – Single European Market

SC – Social Constructivism

Tories – The Conservative Party

UK – The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, commonly known as United Kingdom or Britain

UKIP – United Kingdom Independence Party

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## 1. Introduction

*“I wish that I could bring Stonehenge to Nyasaland<sup>3</sup>, to show that there was a time when Britain had a savage culture.”* – Hastings Kamuzu Banda

What impact EU membership has over its member states? The concern arises from the vast number of governmental areas that have been affected by the European policies. This particular ‘change’ appeared within the recent years, starting with the implementation of the Single European Market (SEM)<sup>4</sup> from 1992, which has not been initiated for a closer economy and trade area, as the previous implemented EU policies – but rather as a driving force for further integration in areas as social policy. According to Alasdair Blair, in the early years, Community used to center its activity towards narrow areas such as agriculture – nowadays, the situation is different, EU activities cover all areas of government, including the national, regional and local levels. Such changes have been initially motivated by the belief that the collective interests bring more benefits to the member states, than the individual ones do.<sup>5</sup> A common approach to these matters has been the use of ‘culture’ notion in examining the way a national policy-making adapted within the given European context.

This master thesis will elucidate the complex notion of ‘culture’ with a particular concern over the idea that *“culture is tied to both economics and politics”*.<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, culture has reached its ‘turning point’ – *“dynamically changing over time and space – the product of ongoing human interaction”*<sup>7</sup>; seemingly it shifted from being treated as a variable for many decades, to nowadays where the scholars started debate states’ powerful relations presented through the cultural spectrum.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Nyasaland, was a British protectorate situated in Africa (1907-1953)

<sup>4</sup> The Single European Market (SEM), proposed by the 1992 Single European Market Programme, referred to employment and industrial relations within the EU. The form of SEM implied a competition between enterprises from different Member States with different direct and indirect labor costs, facing different systems of social and labour regulation.

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/industrialrelations/dictionary/definitions/singleeuropeanmarket.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Blair, A., *Diplomacy: The Impact of the EU on its Member States*, in Carlsnaes W., Sjurson H., White B., – *Contemporary European Foreign Policy*, (2004), 198

<sup>6</sup> Quotation of Adorno T. W. (1991) – *The culture industry*, in Baldwin, J. R., Faulkner, S. L., Hecht, M. L., and Lindsley, S. L. – *Redefining Culture – Perspectives Across the Disciplines*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, New Jersey, (2006), 139

<sup>7</sup> Baldwin, J. R., Faulkner, S. L., Hecht, M. L., and Lindsley, S. L. – *Redefining Culture – Perspectives Across the Disciplines*, (2006), 23

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. 19

Simultaneously, culture has become a synonym for identity, becoming identity marker and differentiator. Of course, culture has always been the mark of social distinction.<sup>9</sup>

### 1.1 Background

The dispute over the trust in the European Union seems to be more present nowadays than it used to be before, mass media showing more attention over the current European debates.

One of the most debated questions is what has led to the rise of Euroscepticism. It is often argued that 'something' is lacking in the relationship between the citizens and EU, a sort of a 'We-feeling'.

The linkage between 'culture' and state's 'national preference/interest' has been neglected – this research investigates to what extent is the notion of culture considered an influential factor when certain governmental decisions are taken.

The cultural aspect appears excessively disregarded within the EU arena, when the reality changes as such – *"Culture is not static; it grows out of a systematically encouraged reverence for selected customs and habits"*.<sup>10</sup> This is the moment when not giving sufficient attention to cultural matters within EU, a growing cultural gulf has appeared between the United Kingdom and Europe. Both of these two groups, European citizens on one side, and the British people 'isolated' from the European beliefs on the other side, perceive EU through two distinctive cultural lenses causing debates – cultural and political ones that might lead UK renouncing to EU membership.

Regarding the UK case, a very first aspect to be acknowledged is the visible British drift to worship their culture. Britain could further benefit of European Union as being part of the EU, London embodying Europe's leading trading point; however the reality faces one paradox: despite the obvious economic advantages of EU membership (and other advantages deriving from the four freedoms of the EU)<sup>11</sup> both leading parties in the British government consider renouncing the EU membership. The leading party in UK government, the Conservative Party, lead by the British Prime Minister David Cameron, supports to a moderate extent exiting the Union, suggesting a renegotiation with Europe followed by a referendum in 2017.

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<sup>9</sup> Benhabib, S. – *The claims of culture – Equality and diversity in the global area*, (2002), 1

<sup>10</sup> Rothkopf, D., "In Praise of Cultural Imperialism?" *Foreign Policy*, Number 107, (1997), 38-53, <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/protected/rothkopf.html>

<sup>11</sup> Four freedoms of the European Union, achieving a frontier-free: people, goods, services, and money

Whereas the UK Independence Party, with Nigel Farage as leader, stands among the strongest Eurosceptics craving an immediate exit of the UK from EU.

However, the entire political debate has been framed by the ‘national interest’ reasoning, when beneath the British national interest lies a stronger cause for the current political situation – it is UK’s long-lasting culture that reflects nowadays in the British government. Also from a historical perspective, the British people know how to value what the previous generations attained – the glorious memory of those times when over a quarter of the entire world land surface has belonged to the British Empire.<sup>12</sup>

Does British culture influence UK politics in regards to European Union’s membership? This research bears relevance for all the European member states, since EU finds itself in a constant *enlargement of cultures*, consequently having a strong impact over EU future.

## 1.2 Aim

The aim of this research is not to remind the already known existence of cultural diversity among the European states, but rather providing a broader aspect of “culture” in EU – finding to what extent does culture influence states’ trust or mistrust in EU, and to what extend culture affects EU political agenda. This general question is then asked in the case of Great Britain. I want to find out what is the British perspective of being inside as EU member state or rather act from outside as a partner.

## Research Questions

The two research questions of this master thesis are:

- Does culture influence the political decisions taken in Britain in regards to the EU?  
// Is there a linkage between culture and the rise of Euroscepticism?
- To be, or not to be in the European Union?

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<sup>12</sup> Gilroy, P. – *After empire: melancholia or convivial culture?* (2004), 5

The overall approach of the thesis is primarily related to the notion of culture, where the particular case of United Kingdom stands as one fundamental case study for this research. Facing today's current debates of 2013, the British case is considered an appropriate analysis tool in understanding the topic of this thesis; emphasizing the high importance a member state's culture has within EU politics and future. Accordingly, a major attention is set over UK within several chapters on their own – *'UK's withdrawal from the EU'* as the fifth chapter, and the *'Analysis'* part exposed in chapter sixth and seventh, where the British politics in EU is remarkably reflected through the cultural lenses. In the very same section *'Analysis'* of seventh chapter, several speeches held by the British Prime Minister David Cameron are evaluated, together with one cultural survey launched among British citizens living in UK – both of these assessments give a substantial analytical contribution for the completion of this thesis.

## 2. Methodology

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Methodology refers to the knowledge of methods. This chapter illustrates one particular method used for the research paper – a mixed design of qualitative and quantitative data; followed by the conservatism ideology as one additional analysis tool.

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### 2.1 Method

Research data analysis can be divided into two main categories – *quantitative data* and *qualitative data*. The differences between them is that quantitative data generalizes more and the results are more precise, while the qualitative data exemplifies more but the results are more sensitive.

Debating such a complex theme as culture, both qualitative and quantitative studies are being used in a mix methods design; while the qualitative method focuses more on the whole theme, the quantitative method brings up more data over a specific theme. This way, by the end of the analysis, it offers openness over how the upcoming result turns to be.<sup>13</sup> According to Grønhaug and Ghauri, one suitable way for exploring an untouched phenomenon as culture, it is undeniably required a deeper qualitative research;<sup>14</sup> and that is because the qualitative method is basically reviewing the sources behind any quantitative result – later on analyzing the reasons behind the quantitative results, hence creating a clear image over the entire research.

In regards to the cultural aspect of this thesis topic, the *qualitative study* has been chosen due to the below main arguments, which eventually presupposes to offer the expected results of this research method:

- ✓ It delivers a deeper understanding of the real world, exploring and describing the human experiences. It tries to find answers on question of 'why', not 'how' of its topic – the notion of 'culture' and 'value'
- ✓ It assumes to gain insight into people's life style, behaviors, concerns, beliefs, motivations, political attitudes, culture, and their future expectations – in concerns to EU

As mentioned, the particular method used for this paper is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative part is given by text analysis of several speeches held

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<sup>13</sup> Kunskaspsansats - *kvalitativt eller kvantitativt perspektiv?*  
<http://infovoice.se/fou/bok/10000002.shtml>

<sup>14</sup> Ghauri, P. and Grønhaug, K. – *Research Methods in Business Studies*, (2005)

by the British Prime Minister David Cameron during 2012-2013 in concern to the ongoing UK-EU situation with a special focus over the cultural matters in-between.

While, the quantitative method is exemplified throughout a survey, addressing the general opinion of British citizens taking use of the survey method, and answering questions as *'how do the British values and beliefs merge with the European ones; to what extent are these values different from the other states'*. The survey has been launched strictly within the United Kingdom territory, targeting British citizens born in UK, as well living currently in UK.

## 2.2 The Conservative Ideology

While trying to create a practical structure along this thesis, above the quantitative and qualitative methods whereas culture representing such a compound theme – *ideas and ideologies* appeared to be an accurate tool for better understanding the complexity around the social aspects of culture, and values.

What is an ideology? How does an idea or ideology evaluation help? To understand the role of each of these notions, Bergström G. and Boréus K. defines – an *idea* can be perceived as a *'constructive thought'*, providing a certain stability and continuity in understanding the society we live in; the use of idea-analysis is helpful in a large paper work, keeping track of the massive given information and different thoughts.<sup>15</sup> Another central reason for the usage of idea concept is the better image of reality that creates.

In addition, *ideology* illustrates an extension version of the idea – ideologies are often interpreted as *'collections of ideas concerning society and politics'*. When the concept of ideology is presented, it is perceived by most of us as a targeted and systematic compilation of political viewpoints – sometimes it occurs camouflaging or even faking society's real interests.

Concluding the definition segment, ideologies, entailing the notion of idea as mentioned, the scholars Bergström G. and Boréus K. classified them in two categories<sup>16</sup>:

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<sup>15</sup> Bergström, G. and Boréus, K. (red.)– *Textens Mening och Makt*, Metodbok i samhällsvetenskaplig text- och diskursanalys, (2012), 140

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

- Ideology is distinguished as a type of system of ideas preferred by the general public as being a neutral definition without mentioning the potential effects, which the ideas might have to the society.
- Ideology is recognized due to the ideology function that is built into the concept. The Marxism ideological point of view falls into this second category - believes that ideology contributes to social cohesion of society or legitimizing specific class interests.<sup>17</sup>

### **Why is an ideology important?**

Ideologies are often developed for one main reason – *the reality* around us is it too hard and way too complex to be understood without any helping tool. Therefore, the ideology of conservatism attempts to explain the complex reality occurring over Europe including the complex relation EU - United Kingdom.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, the conservative ideology reflects over the following three general aspects: 1) people must feel they are a part of something larger and more important than themselves; 2) pride and love for society's institutions and traditions go beyond knowledge and willful acceptance of these things. 3) From the earliest childhood and continuing throughout life individuals need to be part of the great traditions the past generation left for them.<sup>19</sup> As such, David Cameron's Conservative Party attempts to deliver the same principles for its citizens – in order to make them feel one important part of society's démarches.

Conservatism sets strong consideration on beliefs and values before any possible change might occur in society; therefore, the reason why choosing the British Conservative Party as a reference party for this working paper, is due to the ideology it promotes. The fifth chapter 'UK's withdrawal from EU' presenting Prime Minister David Cameron embracing the conservative ideology by not accepting a drastic political change within the British society and hastily withdrawing UK's membership from the EU. Rather, he portrays

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<sup>17</sup> Bergström, G. and Boréus, K. (red.) – *Textens Mening och Makt*, Metodbok i samhällsvetenskaplig text- och diskursanalys, (2012), 141

<sup>18</sup> Edmund Burke (1729- 1797) was the philosophical founder of the conservative ideology; he was an Irish political theorist, philosopher and statesman, and after moving to England served for many years the House of Common of Great Britain. Burke was praised by both conservatives and liberals in the 19th century. Since the 20th century, he has generally been viewed as the philosophical founder of modern conservatism, as well as a representative of classical liberalism.

<sup>19</sup> Bergström, G. and Boréus, K. (red.) – *Textens Mening och Makt*, Metodbok i samhällsvetenskaplig text- och diskursanalys, (2012), 141

moderate attitude reconsidering people's devotion for the British values, what the people want for the society, and starting to renegotiate the UK position in Europe.

According to Dr. Jim L. Riley, the major concept that permeates throughout the long-spectrum of conservative ideology is the untouched value on the existing institutions that have been created by custom and tradition,<sup>20</sup> so that

*"...no well-reasoned governmental decision can justify overturning what time immemorial has produced. Moreover, reason running rampant becomes raging radicalism inevitably destined to destroy much of what generations of human experience have produced".<sup>21</sup>*

## 2.3 Literature Review

### Sources

When pursuing a research paper, it is important to be aware when choosing the material about to be used in your research, because there are factors that might in a moderate or stronger manner, affect the way the researcher selects his/her material and presents it. Therefore – the objectivity is important along the thesis, which I intend to take use of it, not possessing an absolute judgment over the topic in cause, either of the society. When performing the research, objectivity depends on the researcher's chosen perspective – the point of view she or he attains while analyzing the problems, and whether she or he understands them.

The question of *objectivity* does not represent the only concern when performing the research. A second matter of high importance, and to be worried about is the *validity* level of the research.<sup>22</sup> The results of this thesis have been gathered through a complexity of methods; this might cause difficulty in determining whether the results are valid or not. Consequently, the researcher, in this case, myself, had to prudently choose the right group of material for the research and assuring a high validity of the final results.

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<sup>20</sup> Riley, J. L. – *Moderate Political Ideologies: Liberalism and Conservatism* (1990)  
<http://academic.regis.edu/jriley/libcons.htm>

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Svenning, C. – *Metodboken*, 5<sup>th</sup> Ed, Lorentz Förlag, Eslöv, (2003), 11-20

However, it happens that the researcher may misjudge the material used, both written and online, this way making the final data not to match to the given problem.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the topic of this thesis has been objectively approached by the mix design of quantitative and qualitative methods, gaining a high degree of trustworthiness – providing more than a simple answer of “yes or no”, but rather offering a variety of answers, visions, perspectives to such a complex topic as culture.

### **How to conduct the literature review?**

The very first step I began with, was read-through Lund university library catalogs, pinpointing books, and journals addressing to this thesis cultural thematic – all amongst the area of European Union, referring as well to particular European treaties. Next step was to check a variety of articles, which identified the British relation within the EU, which is very appropriate to my cultural area of interest. A major part of these sources are elected from Lund University and Malmö University, and their available databases.

Another approach for my literature and in order to gain more trustworthiness, was the use of online sources; however, I have been aware about the research validity, since the internet pages/sources are difficult to manage without knowing what information is credible or not. Thus, it is essential to distinguish whether the online information is provided by a private person or by organizations.

Organizations such as UN, European Commission, or EU etc. are considered as attaining a high degree of credibility of their official webpages. The majority of the homepages used in this thesis are official governmental webpages, official biographies doctrines/foundations such of Margaret Thatcher biographical foundation, the official webpage of the Lisbon Treaty.

Further on, among the online source I have elected four *speeches* for the ‘Analysis’ section, all of them held by David Cameron. They represent another trustworthy source due to the fact that are directly offered by the British Prime Minister himself. All the four speeches have been recently uploaded online during 2012-2013 period; through a variety of political debates related to UK-EU relation, I managed to select them using key

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<sup>23</sup> Svenning, C. – *Metodboken*, 5<sup>th</sup> Ed, Lorentz Förlag, Eslöv, (2003), 11-20

concepts as “EU draft referendum in UK”, “David Cameron”, or “UK’s withdrawal from EU”. All of these speeches are addressed to the British citizens, to the British wide public, where Cameron expresses his strong belief towards a better UK-EU relation, pursuing the British society in postponing any immediate withdrawal from the Union and accepting the 2017 referendum.

Additionally, for completing ‘Analysis’ section, one *survey* has been launched throughout British citizens living in UK; the respondents had to answer open-ended and closed questions. A part of the surveys has been delivered online, but the major part was personally handed to the surveyed British citizens by a close friend of mine living in London, UK. In total, twenty samples have been delivered, out of which twenty respondents have answered, this way reaching a well-shaped final result.

Other documentation used for the literature review refers to the political legal framework within European treaties, and the official homepage of the University of Lund Sweden, which all together have tremendously facilitated my research.

### 3. Theoretical Framework of Liberal Intergovernmentalism and Social Constructivism

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In this chapter two central theories will be presented – *Liberal Intergovernmentalism* and *Social Constructivism*, both of them attaining a thicker understanding of institutions, national preferences/interests, and national values; likewise, providing for the reader a broader perspective over the European integration process.

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The central reason why social constructivism (SC) and liberal intergovernmentalism (LI) were selected as theory references for this research paper is due to their common manner to approach and analyze European integration's effects over societal and political actors – thus, providing a well-defined linkage between the British culture and UK's desire of exiting the European Union.

The introductory theory to be debated is the liberal intergovernmentalism because it analyzes states' behaviors using a more general overview, usually “*based on rationalist ontology that takes actors' preferences as given*”. While the second theory, social constructivism, goes beneath of what “is given”, and which according to Thomas Risse “*challenges to a more rationalist approaches.*”<sup>24</sup> Accepting this challenge, I have chosen *social constructivism* to stand as the central theoretical approach of this thesis, because it better explains the British Conservative Party discourse on Europe, searching for the real root cause that triggers the British government of having particular behaviors in regards to the EU. Where this paper's root cause is culture that influences over EU politics.

#### 3.1 Liberal Intergovernmentalism (LI)

As definition indicates, LI “*has acquired the status of a baseline theory*”<sup>25</sup> – and therefore it has been chosen as the initiative theoretical approach for this paper.

According to Moravcsik and Schimmelfenning, the liberal intergovernmentalism theory relies on two basic assumptions, this way helping the reader to picture a broader understanding of UK's attempt of leaving EU. The first assumption claims that “*states are actors*” which in relation to EU are perceived as the “*masters of the treaty*”;<sup>26</sup> assumption that provides the British society with the opportunity of enjoying pre-eminent decision-making power and political legitimacy.

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<sup>24</sup> Risse, T., *Liberal Intergovernmentalism*, in Wiener, A., and Diez, T. – *European Integration Theory*, (2009), 147

<sup>25</sup> Moravcsik A. and Schimmelfennig F., *Liberal Intergovernmentalism*, in Wiener, A., and Diez, T. – *European Integration Theory*, (2009), 67

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. 68

*'EU integration can be best understood as a series of rational choices made by national leaders.'*<sup>27</sup> As such, the second assumption underlines *'rationalism'* as a central feature for an interstate cooperation. *"Actors calculate the utility of alternative courses of action and choose the one that maximizes (or satisfies) their utility under the circumstances"*.<sup>28</sup> This assumption gave to the British people 'the alternative course of action' by placing the British values above any national interest, and started consider that exiting EU would lead in *'maximizing their utility'*.

In the recent years, EU enlargement represents the only major project occurring within Europe and that became noticeable among the European states, growing in waves of accession to the present number of 28 member states. According to LI theory, the main trigger in determining the EU grand project to be more reliable and functional is caused by the absence of *national preferences*.<sup>29</sup> Ignoring the importance of those national preferences will do nothing more than increasing the *EU unstable equilibrium*, growing the already existing EU mistrust even more.

On the other hand, if happens that one European state has political control over the fiscal activities and policies within its own state – policies such as social welfare, health care, infrastructure, education, defense spending, immigration and so on – if all these policies remain within the national borders, this will cause one scale chaos among the other member states. Why? Because some already believe that EU suffers of 'democratic deficit' – meaning that the European institutions fail in adapting after the democratic standards of legitimacy and accountability. In consequence, the angry reaction of the European citizens will unquestionably appear, demanding a more stable equilibrium within all the European institutions together with their policies<sup>30</sup> – so that policies as health care, infrastructure, etc., can provide a better democratic equilibrium within EU member states.

Yet the principal reason for LI centrality in this paper is empirical – it clearly sorts out the *national preferences* in concerns to European integration process itself. The United Kingdom is perceived as a unitary body where the British domestic political representation

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<sup>27</sup> Moravcsik, A. – *The Choice of Europe. Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, (1998), 18

<sup>28</sup> Moravcsik A. and Schimmelfennig, F., *Liberal Intergovernmentalism* in Wiener, A., and Diez, T. – *European Integration Theory*, (2009), 68

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. 83

<sup>30</sup> Hindes, Barry – Deficit by Design, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 61 (1), (2002), 30-38

holds a strong 'preference function'. Within the LI theoretical approach, the preference function exemplifies the British state as the first EU member who prefers 'to start renegotiate UK relation with Europe' as the British Prime Minister stated; in LI terms, the renegotiation process within an interstate cooperation is a fundamental preference in international relations.

Additionally, Moravcsik's empirical analysis results indicate the very two main factors shaping state's governmental preference, also referred as the national interest:<sup>31</sup>

State's *economic interest* is considered to be the leading factor determining the overall national interest; the economics issue appears to be of highest significance for EU integration process as well, more central than any other interests. It also provides a brief overview of state's foreign policy, and its behavior on the political international scene.

The second fundamental factor in shaping state's national interest is characterized by the *geopolitical interest*. The fifteen cases analyzed by Moravcsik in '*The Choice for Europe*', clarify that certain national preferences arose "*from a process of domestic conflict in which specific sectoral interests, adjustment costs and, sometimes, geopolitical concerns played an important role*".<sup>32</sup>

The above national interest classification indicate both economics and geopolitics as two powerful aspects in determining state's path towards the European integration, or state's withdrawal from the EU; both of the mentioned aspects are ranked high above the security aspect or other European ideals.

### **3.2 Social Constructivism (SC)**

Social constructivism is considered another major theory explaining European integration. However, the difference between LI and SC theories is that SC does not refer to the European integration process as LI put emphasis, but rather tries to find a clearer path in understanding the European Union per se. With other words, SC better highlights society's cultural aspect, leading this research on safer pathway in finding UK's beneath reasons of existing the EU stage.

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<sup>31</sup> Moravcsik A. and Schimmelfennig, F., *Liberal Intergovernmentalism* in Wiener, A., and Diez, T. – *European Integration Theory*, (2009), 70-83

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. 70

Why is SC a relevant theory for this study? The social constructivism theory has a special way of clarifying that reality we live in “*does not fall from heaven, but that human agents construct and reproduce it through their daily practices*” – as named by Berger and Luckmann “*the social construction of reality*”.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, the motive for selecting SC as main theoretical approach for this paper is to stress the existing spectrum between the cultural belief of UK, and the political stage of the EU. SC elucidates to what extent does culture influence state’s economics and geopolitics, mentioned above as ‘LI two fundamental factors shaping the national interest’.

It is true that SC arrival within the study of EU has been more recent, and so far did not attain such a large number of propositions to compete with other integration theories, such LI. Though, claims Thomas Risse, it is remarkable how quickly SC shifted from “*the stage of meta-theorizing and concern for ontology and epistemology behind and has now entered the realm of concrete empirical work dealing with real puzzles of European political life.*”<sup>34</sup>

There are three main contributions that Social Constructivism has delivered, all summed up according to Thomas Risse’s view<sup>35</sup>:

- Firstly, there is a strong linkage between state’s national interest and culture referred as “*mutual constitutiveness of social structures and agents*”.<sup>36</sup> Accepting the mutual constitutiveness offers us a deeper understanding of Europeanization phenomenon and its impact among the States nation.
- Secondly, denoting the essential consequence/effects of European law, European rules, norms, and policies, it allows us observe, “*how the European integration shapes social identities and interests of actors*”.
- Thirdly, emphasizing the communicative practices enables us to study more closely “*how Europe and the EU are constructed discursively, how actors try to come to grips with the meaning of European integration and how they develop a European public sphere.*”

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<sup>33</sup> Risse, T., *Social Constructivism and European Integration*, in Wiener, Antje, and Diez, Thomas – *European Integration Theory*, (2009), 150-158

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* 158

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* 151

<sup>36</sup> Adler, E. – *Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics*, *European Journal of International Relations*, 3(3), (1997), 319-63

*Conclusion*

Both theories contribute in understanding the European integration process, and enables us accumulate more knowledge about the EU per se.

Liberal Intergovernmentalism theory emphasizes the essential and simplifies EU politics. It basically offers a wider picture of interstate cooperation in the world, relevant aspect for this working paper – member states' cooperation in the European Union<sup>37</sup> with special concern over the British possible withdrawal from the EU. While LI “tests out”, social constructivism generates a large set of logics about social actions, which further on created mid-range propositions about human behavior.

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<sup>37</sup> Moravcsik A. and Schimmelfennig F., *Liberal Intergovernmentalism*, in Wiener, Antje, and Diez, Thomas – *European Integration Theory*, (2009), 67

## 4. Culture

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*“A people without the knowledge of their past history, is like a tree without its roots”*.<sup>38</sup> The notion of ‘culture’ will be extensively examined along its development through the years – starting from its origins, to the linkage it creates with the political stage; in the second part, the notion of ‘communicating culture’ is defined.

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The first section deals with the notion of ‘culture’, complex notion that requires a deeper understanding, thus starting with the basic idea of culture’s origins. Alfred Kroeber together with Clyde Kluckhohn claim *“– that different nations operate with different categories, assumptions, and moralities – is ancient and can be found in the Bible, Homer, Hippocrates, Herodotus, and Chinese scholars of the Han dynasty”*.<sup>39</sup>

Later, in the ancient period, the concept of culture has been modestly introduced although with certitude within an enormously doctrine illustrated as such – culture embodies the simple fact where *‘people think and feel different about the world’*, and this is not something to be worry about, either to consider people demented. The ancient doctrine makes it explicit that people have this tendency of simply creating different assumptions in order to make their own sense of the world they inhabit and looking for a logical reasoning of it.<sup>40</sup>

This research paper begins from the premise that culture offers tremendous new insights into society’s customs, attitudes, and beliefs – premise of high relevance when dealing with the British culture and its implications over society’s political decisions.

### 4.1 Definitions and Concepts

From the middle of 1960s to the end of 1970s, culture has been regarded as an anthropologic term. Even though the term has been used within different fields, such as literary studies, philosophy, or social work, Kroeber and Kluckhohn were absolutely sure by the fact that culture remains a technical term that exclusively belongs to the field of anthropology. It can be noticed that starting from the 1970s, culture has migrated to different to an extended number of fields, and has become the central tool of methodology and of the research questions. The current amount of definitions departs from Kroeber and

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<sup>38</sup> Quotation of Marcus Garvey

<sup>39</sup> Quotation of Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn (1952) – *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, in Baldwin John R., Faulkner Sandra L., Hecht Michael L. and Lindsley Sheryl L. – *Redefining Culture – Perspectives Across the Disciplines*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, U.S., (2006), ix

<sup>40</sup> Baldwin J. R., Faulkner S. L., Hecht M. L. and Lindsley S. L. – *Redefining Culture – Perspectives Across the Disciplines*, (2006), ix

Kluckhohn's statements, emphasizing that the notion of culture has grown and it became more difficult to be sustained and therefore it reshaped the definition.<sup>41</sup>

In a cultural retrospective, Clifford Geertz affirms that in 1970s the concept of culture has shifted from being an object of study, in a more flexible tool of study for different study projects.<sup>42</sup>

Like most of the central terms, such as citizenship, democracy, the notion of *culture* is supposedly embodied in the politics of the discipline, receiving a large number of definitions in the context of social analysis and distinct projects. Theoretically, there are many versions in defining culture, versions with certain differences – yet, a large amount of these differences reflect towards one common sense, that culture is:

*“concerned with the development of coherent viewpoints which bring a cumulative effect to otherwise isolated experiences of a group, making them feel special yet allowing others to have a parallel experience.”<sup>43</sup>*

Without any doubt, the above definition illustrates culture as something people can identify themselves with, and 'making them feel special'. It represents a system of social control, where people manifest their behavior in accordance to various stimuli, and gradually learning how to adapt and monitor their actions with the other persons.

The problem appears when certain political decisions appear to have negative influence and shaping the 'European' culture, the values, and neglecting its history. This aspect causes a common problem within all the 28 member states – generally, people identify themselves only through political decision, and in the 'positive' case they have been active participants among those decisions. Unfortunately the sad truth with EU cultural area is that culture stopped being valued, as it should. Apparently, there are exceptions, and UK is among them where culture has never stopped being worshipped. *How did British people succeed in identifying with culture?* An elaborated response will be presented in 'Analysis' chapter where several speeches held by the British Prime Minister David Cameron, and one cultural survey in UK will answer this question.

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<sup>41</sup> Baldwin J. R., Faulkner S. L., Hecht M. L. and Lindsley S. L. – *Redefining Culture – Perspectives Across the Disciplines*, (2006), xi

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. xii

<sup>43</sup> Quotation of Veltman, Kim H. – *Why Culture is Important*, (1998), 76

Culture can be perceived as one helping tool in understanding what lies beneath any state's national interest. The scholars acknowledge the British deep-rooted culture that – defined as 'the values, customs of a society, attitudes' – has 'constructed Europe in contrast to their understanding of the nation, particularly the English nation'; relevant example emphasizing the existence of diversity among Europe. *Cultural diversity* aspect presents extreme relevance when analyzing state's national interest aside from the EU politics. As the British case triggers – before trying to understand the British governmental decisions with the European Union, it is essential to gain a degree of knowledge over their culture. Once the researcher achieved a level of information, he or she will raise awareness over the fact that British culture is different from all the other member states, distinctive in EU; as such, the research questions might be reset in a different manner than it was initially planned.

#### **4.2 Communicating Culture**

A large number of studies indicate the presence of a highly lack of information between EU and citizens of the 28 European states. This lack of communication clearly requires the presence of social constructivism spectrum within society, among the British citizens – whereas SC highlights the importance of society's cultural aspect among the governmental decisions.

Within a study research, Jürgen Gerhards has dedicated intense observation over the relation between the nation-state and supra-national body of the EU. Apparently, the results have revealed one negative insight caused by two important aspects:

- The citizens' focus of attention seldom happens to exist over EU as an entity, thus the citizens rather tend to center the attention over what occurs inside a specific nation state territory. This is also being caused by the mass media nationally based and nationally oriented reports delivered to the citizens from the national arenas.
- Even though mass media happens to deliver information outside the national-arenas, for example reporting one particular event from the city of Brussels, the information can easily become diverged having 'specific perspective of interests of a distinct nation-state'.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Kaitatzi-Whitlock, S. – *Europe's political communication deficit*, (2005), 265-266

These observations indicate a weak relation over the controlling process of transferring resources and keeping information valid between the European nations and the EU. More than that, Kaitatzi-Whitlock Sophia affirms the existence of no relation at all when it comes down of achieving a “*common European interest*”.<sup>45</sup>

Another comparative research conducted by Frank Brettschneider and Markus Rettich for a long period of 7 years (between 1998-2004), has revealed the negative relation existing between the nation-states, media, and Europolitics. What is most surprising about these results is the fact that the research covers most part of Germany, a country ranked as one of the most positive towards European integration, unlike the United Kingdom, which strongly keeps the status of the most Eurosceptic member state. Nonetheless, perhaps it should be a waking alarm among the Eurocrats, if a negative relation exists even in such a country whose politics are in favor for the European integration project.

Brettschneider and Rettich enable us to rethink the question – how strong is the linkage between culture and Europolitics, by clarifying that “*European integration has not quite arrived at the editors’ doorsteps*”<sup>46</sup> – helps us understand that Euro agenda has different impact within every nation. With other words, Brussels’ messages are perceived distinctively by every state per se due to their national preference/interest they expose, or due to other cultural matters. It is the nation state deciding when or to whom ‘opening their door’.

According to Sophia Kaitatzi-Whitlock, culture plays one significant role when these ‘doors’ to be opened to the messages coming from the city of Brussels. It lies in the spectrum of national cultural which European topic attracts citizens’ interest. It has often happened that certain European topics have the highest impact on citizens’ attention in the context of “*outstanding occasions*”, such as when the European monetary entered into place in 1998, or when the financial scandal from 1999 occurred. These particular occasions arise rarely and they manage to have citizens’ full attention; otherwise, the majority of EU matters appear as such – “*European topics attract scant, selective and short-lived attention*”.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Kaitatzi-Whitlock, S. – *Europe’s political communication deficit*, (2005), 264-266

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. 266

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

Politicians began to assign more consideration over the notion of '*communicating culture*' that has increasingly generated one large influence over EU future and how will it merge with the wide cultural diversity EU is highly challenged up to date, and undoubtedly more cultures to further join. The Eurocrats started assess that the geographical borders are no longer defining Europe's culture, but rather the opposite. The cultural space of Europe defines the European geographical space.

*“This also means that the common European cultural space cannot be defined in opposition to national cultures. Polish farmers and British workers should not see ‘European culture’ as something foreign or even threatening.... / What constitutes the content of ‘European culture’ is not a philosophical question that can be answered a priori; nor is it a merely historical question. It is a question that calls for political decisions which attempt to demonstrate the significance of tradition in the face of future tasks that Europe’s Union must address.”<sup>48</sup>*

### *Conclusion*

Why should the EU member states focus in helping intercultural dialogue develop? The answer is rather simple – the characteristic of communicating culture can either unite people as well can divide them. Cultural differences appear on different levels, e.g. in workplaces, local communities, schools, and can also cause conflict at a country's level. It is because Europe's cultural face is changing dramatically, expanding and bringing new member states with a vast cultural diversity.

European culture does not shape the European unity, but it has the capacity to create such opportunity for a European unity to rise – “*culture is the heart and content of politics*”.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Quotation of Biedenkopf K. – *The Spiritual and Cultural Dimension of Europe, Official Report initiated by the European Commission, The European Institute for Human Sciences, (2004), 9*

<sup>49</sup> Quotation of Pfetsch Frank – *European Culture, European Identity, (2002), 1-2*

## 5. United Kingdom's Withdrawal from EU – Case of Cultural Values

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*Britain decided to take the bull by the horns!*

The following section presents the particular case of United Kingdom, and the long lasting desire of leaving the EU stage. Firstly, the legal procedure for a member state's voluntary exit from EU is illustrated, followed by the recent debate over the British government elections held on May 2013.

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The British society strongly indicates the fact that culture is substantial when it comes down to EU politics and 'national preference'/interest. LI theoretical approach provides a clear understanding of the British state's national preferences, while SC argues that beneath the British national interest exists a stronger interest – the cultural values (please see chapter three).

### 5.1 Legal Procedure – Lisbon Treaty 2009

The legal procedure enclosed in the EU Treaty concerning a possible withdrawal of a member state from the EU, underlines that is entirely legal to voluntarily renounce on the EU membership.

At the moment, the European Union has grown up to 28 member states through different waves of accession,<sup>50</sup> and it is open to even further enlargements, which eventually could end up with thirty-three member states, and why not more. Whereas the accession negotiation with Croatia started in 2005 March 15<sup>th</sup>, and by 2013 July 1<sup>st</sup> became the 28<sup>th</sup> newest member in the European Union. The current European member states are already facing a large diversity of culture, different views, and interests among them. Hence, the provision of a “*voluntary withdrawal from the Union*” is apparently welcomed by certain states, as UK is. It would be the single and ultimate alternative in the case of dealing serious problems with a Member State, or due to other unfavorable factors within the Union that are in the detriment of the state in cause.

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<sup>50</sup> The European Union process (EU) increased in waves of enlargement – above the six founding members from 1957 (Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands), a further 22 states joined the EU. In 1973, Denmark, Ireland, and the United Kingdom joined, followed by Greece in 1981. Spain and Portugal enclose the third enlargement in 1986. Followed by the fourth enlargement in 1995 when Austria, Finland and Sweden join. In 2004 EU faces the largest enlargement so far with ten new countries: Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. In 2007 two more states become EU members: Bulgaria and Romania, increasing the number to 27 member states. Croatia is the newest member joining the EU in 2013.

Official webpage of European Commission, Enlargement –

[http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/policy/from-6-to-28-members/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/policy/from-6-to-28-members/index_en.htm)

Before the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009, there has been no concrete statement in the European Union law, or any other treaties outlining the ability of a member state to voluntarily withdraw from the EU.<sup>51</sup>

Hence, Article 50 TEU states that: *"Any Member State may decide to withdraw from the Union in accordance with its own constitutional requirements"*<sup>52</sup>, additionally –

*"A Member State which decides to withdraw shall notify the European Council of its intention. In the light of the guidelines provided by the European Council, the Union shall negotiate and conclude an agreement with that State, setting out the arrangements for its withdrawal, taking account of the framework for its future relationship with the Union. That agreement shall be negotiated in accordance with Article 218(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. It shall be concluded on behalf of the Union by the Council, acting by a qualified majority, after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament."*<sup>53</sup>

However, in the case where one EU state has voluntarily decided to give up the EU membership, the Lisbon Treaty, Article 50, paragraph 5 provides the alternative that throughout a different legal procedure the state in cause could ask to rejoin the Union, and consequently recovering its membership.<sup>54</sup> Nonetheless, the application is deliberated once it fulfills the requirements within the Article 49 from the Lisbon Treaty.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Athanassiou, P. – *Withdrawal and Expulsion from the EU and EMU: Some Reflections* (PDF). Legal Working Paper Series (European Central Bank), (2009)

<sup>52</sup> Piris, J.C., with a Foreword by Angela Merkel – *The Lisbon Treaty – A Legal and Political Analysis*, (2010), 110

<sup>53</sup> The official webpage of The Lisbon Treaty

<http://www.lisbon-treaty.org/wcm/the-lisbon-treaty/treaty-on-european-union-and-comments/title-6-final-provisions/137-article-50.html>

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> The official webpage of The Lisbon Treaty – Article 49, *"Any European State which respects the values referred to in Article 2 and is committed to promoting them may apply to become a member of the Union. The European Parliament and national Parliaments shall be notified of this application. The applicant State shall address its application to the Council, which shall act unanimously after consulting the Commission and after receiving the assent of the European Parliament, which shall act by an absolute majority of its component members."*

<http://www.lisbon-treaty.org/wcm/the-lisbon-treaty/treaty-on-european-union-and-comments/title-6-final-provisions/136-article-49.html>

## 5.2 Local Government Elections in UK, May 2013

This subchapter presents the local government elections in UK as an introduction for “Analysis” following sections, where a more elaborated debate will indicate where does the Conservative Party stand in regards to the British cultural linkage with the EU.

During the past weeks, in particular concern the May month of 2013 has been a very controversial one within the British political arena – May 2<sup>nd</sup> the local government elections 2013 have been held, where UK’s potential withdraw from the European Union has caused the central debate between the political parties alongside with their political leaders. The two main parties that gain the entire attention have been the Conservative Party and United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP); where the British Prime Minister David Cameron confronted UKIP opposition stated by Nigel Farage.

Before analyzing the ongoing controversy between the two political leaders D. Cameron and N. Farage, a brief description of both parties will surely offer a better overview of the elections’ result, a clear perspective over the ideas, and ideologies these two parties sustain, with a larger focus on the Conservative leading party. 1) *The Conservative and Unionist Party*, referred, as the Tory Party is one center-right party containing three overlapping categories – the first one being represented by *Thatcherites or Conservative Way Forward*, which are strongly supporting free market and having a tendency of Euroscepticism. The second group of *One Nation Conservatives* has a large tendency of Europhile and socially conservative; and the third category within the Conservative Party are being as well socially conservative but rather having the deepest sense for Euroscepticism, namely the *Cornerstone Group*.<sup>56</sup>

*David Cameron*, Member of the Parliament for Witney<sup>57</sup>, Prime Minister and Leader of the Conservative Party is the leader of the Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition Government ‘*inspired by the values of freedom, fairness and responsibility*’.<sup>58</sup> His philosophy has always underlined that politicians are the citizens’ servants, and those who are in control are the people, and not the other way around – for him, social responsibility is above any state power.

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<sup>56</sup> The Conservative Party UK – [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conservative\\_Party\\_\(UK\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conservative_Party_(UK))

<sup>57</sup> Witney is a county in Oxfordshire and represents UK’s Parliament constituency, currently represented by the Prime Minister, David Cameron; the Witney constituency is also represented in the House of Commons

<sup>58</sup> Witney Conservatives official webpage

<http://www.witneyconservatives.com/person/david-cameron-mp-witney-constituency>

In regards to European Union matters, the Conservative party has always supported Britain's national interest over Europe. In a big picture, the Conservatives sustain the idea that *'Britain should remain in Europe, not just selling goods in the single market but having a say in its rules'*.<sup>59</sup>

While on the other side, 'the official opposition' UKIP lead by *Nigel Farage*, stands as a right-wing populist party. UKIP has been founded in 1993 to campaign UK's withdrawal from EU, stating about their own party *"Not because we hate Europe, or foreigners, or anyone at all; but because it is undemocratic, expensive, bossy – and we still haven't been asked whether we want to be in it."*<sup>60</sup> UKIP believes that the people should be given the right to govern themselves, rather to accept being governed by the bureaucrats in Brussels.

The governmental election final results have not been as expected by the Conservative Party, whereas in regards to the UKIP party, Professor John Curtice of Strathclyde University stated, "had achieved a remarkable performance". He also emphasized in a paper for the Political Studies Association that England for its very first time since the Second World War is being threat by a fourth party<sup>61</sup> outside the Big Three<sup>62</sup>, this way turning UKIP into the 'official opposition'.

The Conservative chairman, Grant Shapps has made a public declaration after the election's results plotting to some extent his party's beliefs

*"I think that people's views must be listened to and I think people are saying something very, very loud and clear here – they're saying we want to make sure that hardworking people can get on. We are fed on with a welfare system that traps people on benefits and we don't like all this interference from Europe and therefore we'd like to have a referendum."*<sup>63</sup>

This election result has directly addressed to the government to start prioritizing the British economics and welfare, by ensuing a referendum implementation – proposition highly

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<sup>59</sup> Britain's in-out referendum 'Europe: You Decide'

[http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Issues/Europe\\_you\\_decide.aspx](http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Issues/Europe_you_decide.aspx)

<sup>60</sup> UK Independence Party official webpage

<http://www.ukip.org/index.php/the-party/2013-01-25-10-55-06>

<sup>61</sup> *The Guardian*, 2013 May 3<sup>rd</sup>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2013/may/03/ukip-gains-local-elections>

<sup>62</sup> The 'big three' parties in the British politics - 1<sup>st</sup> Conservative and Unionist Party, 2<sup>nd</sup> Liberal Democrats, 3<sup>rd</sup> Labor Party

<sup>63</sup> *The Guardian*, 2013 May 3<sup>rd</sup>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/blog/2013/may/03/local-elections-2013-live-blog>

taken under Conservatives' consideration; the next section presents the demarches the party already has made in concern to EU referendum.

### **5.3 “Europe: You Decide” – Draft In-Out Referendum**

Despite the increasing dissatisfaction among the European citizens, it seems that the United Kingdom stands (for now) as the only member state considering in ‘abandoning the EU boat’. David Cameron is facing massive pressure within his own party to satisfy and renegotiate UK relations to EU, and a referendum to be held. The Conservative members believe that too much power to Brussels is having a negative effect to UK’s democracy. More than that, the Euro skeptics in his party stresses to see actions rather than words – meaning that more power should be brought from Brussels to West ministers. This intrigue rises among the British people as well, dividing themselves in two groups of ‘staying in EU’ or ‘leaving the EU’.

However, despite all the widespread criticism David Cameron is confronting, expressly after in one of his speeches he stated “*It is time to settle this European question in British politics*”, his idea is yet sustained by the left, Eurosceptics, as well by the right, Europhiles.<sup>64</sup> Cameron’s plan is backed up even by the former Conservative Prime Minister, Sir John Major, expressing his hopes for a referendum “*The relationship with Europe has poisoned British politics for too long, distracted parliament from other issues and come close to destroying the Conservative Party. It is time to resolve this matter*”.<sup>65</sup>

Thus nowadays, the ongoing ‘European Question in British Politics’ has reached its boiling point, provoking the British Prime Minister David Cameron to step out from the “comfort zone” which UK has assimilated to itself for too long – The government has repeatedly ignored to consult the British citizens over the changes occurring in the European Union, making the euroscepticism to increase. Hence, all the unanswered questions, doubts, along the entire ignored situation over the EU must be clarified for the British people; otherwise the withdrawal from the EU will gain more support, causing a worse situation. David Cameron has decided to start renegotiating Britain’s relationship with a changed EU, a proper moment where the British people are asked to choose – as they consider best for

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<sup>64</sup> SWP, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Tim L. Oliver, 2013 May 14<sup>th</sup> – *Why an In-Out Referendum Won’t Settle the European Question in British Politics*  
[http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-comments-en/swp-aktuelle-details/article/britains\\_european\\_question.html](http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-comments-en/swp-aktuelle-details/article/britains_european_question.html)

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

their own country – whether maintaining this new settlement with a changed EU or leaving the EU is the right decision for United Kingdom’s future. The Conservative Party promotes the idea of Britain to remain in Europe, sustaining this belief under the campaign “*Europe: You Decide.*”<sup>66</sup>

Worth to emphasize is that a referendum cannot guarantee an exact results in its aftermath; it might imply either positive or negative effects for the citizens. Nonetheless, when it comes to the origins of any referenda, one common thing has been agreed upon – ‘commitments to referenda have repeatedly been used as a means to manage tensions within a governing party, or, more recently, a coalition’.<sup>67</sup> In our case, the referenda originate from Cameron’s intention to balance the growing present discomfort between the Conservative Party caused by the Eurosceptic UK Independence Party’s threat. This tension between UKIP and the coalition is identified thus as one enduring issue about Europe in the party – William Hague, the former Conservative Party leader, and current Foreign Secretary, presented Europe as a “ticking time bomb”.

The positive aspect about this referendum is that it confronts the large British public opinion, which has been shaped for too long by negative inputs over EU alarmed by Eurosceptic messages. However, we should not have great expectations from this campaign that will last few months, to provoke a permanent change over an issue that has caused political anxiety for more than six decades. Therefore, the British people should be aware over the fact that this referendum – which will take place only if the Conservatives will be reelected in 2015 – illustrates ‘a single step’. The first step that can only be maintained if the citizens can perceive it as ‘the beginning of one improved understanding for the EU’, and will also be prepared for an ongoing period of change. This way, allowing a fresh democratic relationship to the EU, providing Her Majesty’s Government to better handle on UK’s relationship, whether as a member in the EU or as a partner outside the EU.

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<sup>66</sup> The official webpage of Conservatives

[http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Issues/Europe\\_you\\_decide.aspx](http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Issues/Europe_you_decide.aspx)

<sup>67</sup> SWP, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Tim L. Oliver, 2013 May 14<sup>th</sup> – *Why an In-Out Referendum Won’t Settle the European Question in British Politics*

[http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-comments-en/swp-aktuelle-details/article/britains\\_european\\_question.html](http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-comments-en/swp-aktuelle-details/article/britains_european_question.html)

On the other side, the negative aspect about this referendum is that it offers the supporters of withdrawal the chance to eventually put an end of any European interference in United Kingdom's society and life.

Thus, the citizens, both Eurosceptic and Europhile, will eventually be able to make their voices heard by answering the simple question: "*Do you think the UK should remain a member of the European Union?*" offering a yes-no answer in the matter, deciding if EU will remain a part of British life.

However, the only entity that has the power to call a referendum is the government and it lies almost entirely in the hands of the Prime Minister deciding the choices that are about to be given to the citizens, as well the time period of finalizing it.

According to a recent research, conducted by Pew Research Center, the statistical results show that at this date, the British opinions are divided in half with 46% of the respondents in favor to remain in the EU, and with other 46% wanting to leave the EU.

At this early date, 46% of the public want to remain in the EU and 46% want to depart.<sup>68</sup>

The BBC News Online presents the British Minister for Education Michael Gove's interview, stating that if a referendum were held now, would vote in favor of leaving Great Britain European Union.

He expresses his Eurosceptic complains "*I am not satisfied with our position in the EU and prefer a change in British relationship with the EU / Life outside the EU would be perfect, we enjoy it*". Despite these convincing statements, Prime Minister David Cameron believes that the rational decision is to follow the initiated plan in renegotiating Great Britain's status in the European Union, and further on organize a referendum after the reform bloc.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Pew Research Center

<http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/05/13/chapter-2-economic-crisis-now-an-eu-crisis/>

<sup>69</sup> The Guardian, 2013 May 13<sup>th</sup>

[http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2013/may/12/eu-referendum-cabinet-david-cameron?CMP=tw\\_t\\_gu](http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2013/may/12/eu-referendum-cabinet-david-cameron?CMP=tw_t_gu)

*Conclusion*

The recent voting in local elections has seen a huge rise in the power of the UK Independence Party seen as a protest vote against both Labour and the Conservatives; it is about restoring a center right government. One that is able to influence Europe and be part of it, but not one that is governed and controlled by it, stated the UKIP's Eurosceptics.

On the other side, David Cameron considers himself master of his party by invoking the 2017 referendum, offering the alternative of EU membership while other parties don't. As such, during the last decades he appears as the first leader of this nation that claimed "*it is the right time to renegotiate United Kingdom's relation to Europe*" offering the people to choose whether they should remain inside EU, or it is better off out.

The reality the British nation deals with, is that British governments will keep struggling in creating a balance between the domestic necessities and the pressure is needed to work with – maintaining the society within one changed EU.

## 6. Analysis – Across Generations

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“Britain’s history and its strong national sense have been shaped by the sea”.<sup>70</sup>  
This chapter set further light into the cultural sector, stressing culture as one reliable linkage between people, nations, as well amongst international bodies such the EU.

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Both of the following two chapters, sixth and seventh, are introducing for the reader the analysis framework for this research paper – namely, a deeper evaluation over the United Kingdom’s particular case, the association between the British cultural norms and the European politics.

### 6.1 Behavior

Cross-cultural knowledge has always been attractive for most of us, people having the willingness and desire to understand different cultures, ethnicities and different national groups. However, they prefer clear examples in turn when receiving information about different cultures, such as reminders of their own lives. This way some ‘aha’ reactions should lighten up their understanding about cultural differences. With other words, people are in favor of a ‘clear language’ followed by simple examples that illustrates a set of concepts that characterize how culture can be understood.<sup>71</sup>

Captivating Richard W. Brislin’s academic input, psychologist teacher at University of Hawaii at Manoa, a 7-point cultural framework will be elaborated from a large number of existing definitions of culture. The aim of this framework is to encourage people to be aware of the existing cultural differences, and to learn more about it. It basically prepares people to start thinking more how does culture influence their own lives, and how to better interact with the so-called *cultural diversity*. Note – the following seven points have been carefully elected with a large extent associated to the British cultural spectrum when interacting with Europe’s culture diversity.

The first point (1) suggests that *culture is transmitted from one generation to the next generation*, and that the ‘information’ received by the younger generation is the responsibility of the parents, teachers, or any other elder mentor from your life; by information it refers to behaviors, values, social customs etc. In addition, the second point (2) deals with the given information to the children, and how they *learn the meaning of*

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<sup>70</sup> McDowall, D. – *An illustrated history of Britain*, (1989), 3

<sup>71</sup> Baldwin J. R., Faulkner S. L., Hecht M. L. and Lindsley S. L. – *Redefining Culture – Perspectives Across the Disciplines*, (2006), 84

*culture*. According to Hofstede, children learn from both a) individualistic behaviors such as developing their identity separate from others and identifying themselves with the verb ‘I am’, strongly defending their own opinions; b) as well they learn from collectivistic behavior in culture, socializing with others helps them value interdependency and identify with the verb ‘we are’.

This raises a question mark for the British people – are they individualistic or collectivistic in regards to the Europeans? I hope that the survey results have clarified to a certain extent this perspective of culture, namely that British society has a far more individualistic than collectivistic approach when it comes to Europe, or to any other lateral European aspects.

The third point of the cultural framework (3) stands probably as the most difficult one to be enlightened – “*Culture is not discussed. Much of it is taken for granted, much like the air we breathe*”.<sup>72</sup> Culture is not something to think about, it is more likely to think about the air we breath that simply exists. It has been shown that people coming from the same culture and living in the same country tend not to discuss about what is their culture. Therefore, they are either prepared to discuss about their own values, traditions to the visitors from other cultures coming to see their country.

At this fourth point (4) we come upon *learning and understanding the importance of intercultural interactions*. Such as British case, the culture becomes more visible when starting to interact with the European continent, people from different backgrounds. People do feel themselves socially attracted in skilled behaviors similar to their culture so called “well-meaning of clashes”<sup>73</sup>. According to Brislin W. Richard, a clash of culture appears when interacting with people from different backgrounds; however, a group of people can effortlessly and efficiently interacts with different cultural behaviors than their own, if they feel socially appropriate.

On the other side, it might happen sometimes that people respond with a negative attitude when their cultural beliefs are being emotionally violated and misunderstood by the others.

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<sup>72</sup> Baldwin J. R., Faulkner S. L., Hecht M. L. and Lindsley S. L. – *Redefining Culture – Perspectives Across the Disciplines*, (2006), 85

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. 86

These emotional and helpless reactions are the roots of cultural shock, when people put a great energy in adapting themselves, for example, in other country.<sup>74</sup>

At this point, we can now agree that culture gives guidance for citizens' behaviors, and for politicians' behavior as well (5) when they should carry out a *public speech*; each culture approaches different political behaviors in public, each nation preserving its own script to be followed when addressing in front of the nation.

However, that so called *script* is divided in two main alternatives – a) the politicians decide for their announcement to be public. And within this category, both the British Prime Minister David Cameron and UKIP's leader Nigel Farage choose their political suggestion to be public, and be firmly expressed for the entire nation; b) the political decisions are stated during one-on-one discussion so that a possible public embarrassment or disagreement could be avoided. Professor Richard Brislin believes that “*opportunities to develop a 'thick skin' to deal with public criticism differ greatly across cultures*”.<sup>75</sup>

If people are aware of culture, they possess a reasonable degree of knowledge about it, (6) certain gaps can be filled and the *cultural shock could decrease*. The seventh aspect of culture (7) has its *purpose of reminding to the people* that culture is “*transmitted across generation*” (point one), therefore it will not change very soon. Culture does not represent a process of quick transformation.<sup>76</sup> If the new generation will desire to adopt certain changes in the society they inhabit, the solution is not to follow a common behavior of the grandparents and grand-grandparents – the more you are trapped in the “comfort zone” of habitual behavior, the harder you can produce tangible changes around you.

Paradoxically, it seems that British case does not fit within the seventh cultural aspect – a major part of the new generation is keen to see changes in the British political arena, where the very unique solution is by attaining the 'exit-key' from the EU. Differently said, UK citizens choose British culture above the British political interest and “*follow the habitual behaviors of their grand-grandparents*”, returning to their splendid isolated island as before.

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<sup>74</sup> I Baldwin J. R., Faulkner S. L., Hecht M. L. and Lindsley S. L. – *Redefining Culture – Perspectives Across the Disciplines*, (2006), 86

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. 87

## 6.2 The 'Splendid Isolated Island': Major Sense for Culture

'The splendid isolated island' refers to the British nation alongside their territory represented by two particular aspects – The first indicating United Kingdom's geographical position outside any European border, being situated on an island; while the second aspect refers to the British culture and values worshipped until nowadays. Both features, geographical and cultural merge perfectly within the 'splendid isolated island' context.

When looking back over Britain's history, it reveals the great glory British nation ruled during a long period; like no other country Britain has enjoyed a prosperous long period of economic and social wellbeing.<sup>77</sup> Obviously, the gained values from the history reflect certain influence over the present times, creating the question – is it in Britain's advantage returning to the 'splendid isolated island'?

To emphasize the importance of cultural aspect within foreign policies, and among the interstate cooperation – history together with national values play a central role when taking political decisions. As if we go back into the British history, after the First World War, some Europeans have tried in creating a European Union with the purpose of preventing and avoiding any repetition of war. In their turn, few British people liked the idea, but when it came down to the point where to formalize it, while France proposed such an arrangement in 1930 – a British politician made his point clearly understood when he spoke for the entire nation:

*"Our hearts are not in Europe; we could never share the truly Europe point of view nor become real patriots of Europe. Besides, we could never give up our own patriotism for an Empire, which extends to all parts of the world... The character of the British people makes it impossible for us to take part seriously in any Pan-European system".*<sup>78</sup>

Another significant aspect that increases the concept of 'isolated island' illustrates the Euro crisis phenomenon that has only caused a wider separation between Britain and Europe, even though UK tried itself to progress economically. In the British media, or any other national narrative, Europe has been seen for a long time as the 'other', against which the British people, especially English public, felt their identity was cast. The notion of 'identity' in appears to be strongly rooted in the British mindset, and therefore easier to

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<sup>77</sup> McDowall, D. – *An illustrated history of Britain*, (1989), 184

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. 173

misinterpret the way Europeans behave in terms of culture, economics, and society. In one of his speeches, David Cameron once stated that –

*“Ours is not just an island story – it is also a continental story.”*<sup>79</sup>

Along the history, Britain has avoided any revolution, invasion, foreign occupation or any other catastrophic defeat – and more than that, the British nation has never faced such a situation as the present one, where to be forced to reevaluate its own identity, especially in relation to Europe. Thus, the above-mentioned referendum can provoke such a re-evaluation, but given the fact that the Europe issue has been present for a long time of the post-war era, people should not expect a prompt change, where the British political elite will *“deconstruct and reconstruct the givens of Britain’s national identity.”*<sup>80</sup>

### *Conclusion*

It remains questionable if Britain can reconcile its relationship with the EU, adapting to a new and changed Europe, or will persist in maintaining the ‘isolated splendid island’ idea and influencing to a certain extent the governmental decisions in regards to EU. However, a referendum plan will only symbolize the beginning to an end, but not a fixed end point between UK-EU relation.

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<sup>79</sup> SWP, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Tim L. Oliver, 2013 May 14<sup>th</sup> – *Why an In-Out Referendum Won’t Settle the European Question in British Politics*  
[http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-comments-en/swp-aktuelle-details/article/britains\\_european\\_question.html](http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-comments-en/swp-aktuelle-details/article/britains_european_question.html)

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

## 7. The European Question in British Politics

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*When is the right time if not now?*

Several speeches will be assessed, held by the British Prime Minister David Cameron during the last months, starting from October 2012 to May 2013 when UK's local government elections had place. Followed by one cultural survey analysis conducted among the British citizens living in UK; both analyses indicate to what extend are the British values/culture different from the European ones.

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For this second part/chapter of analysis, I have chosen a mix method design, merging the qualitative method results given by David Cameron's speeches, with the quantitative method statistical results obtained from the cultural survey. The reason for this merge is because the qualitative method it basically reviews and analyzes the sources behind any quantitative result – hence offering a clear image over the entire research.

In concern to the invoked referendum by David Cameron, the Conservative Party could be placed within the 'ideological context of power'. According to Bergström and Boréus, Cameron's initiative to invoke the entire British nation to participate to such a referendum, is placed within the 'social context' – where the Conservative ideology is not using the 'fact' word but instead taking use of neutral data, so that *'no one should be excluded, everyone should feel prioritized'*.<sup>81</sup>

### 7.1 Speech Analysis – David Cameron, the British Prime Minister

As the Webster's Third New International Dictionary claims culture, *"total pattern of human behavior and its products embodied in speech, action, and artifacts and dependent upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations."*<sup>82</sup>

Nowadays the British government is facing a strong sense of Euro skepticism from both leading political parties – David Cameron's Conservative Party presenting a moderate enthusiasm of UK leaving the European Union and trying to maintain discipline, while the UKIP's 'official opposition' show an extreme sense of Euro skepticism. Where Nigel Farage argues that leaving the Union will certainly bring a vast amount of benefits in Britain's favor.

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<sup>81</sup> Bergström, G. and Boréus, K. (red.) – *Textens Mening och Makt*, Metodbok i samhällsvetenskaplig text- och diskursanalys, (2012), 164

<sup>82</sup> Quotation of David Rothkopf, "In Praise of Cultural Imperialism?" Foreign Policy  
<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/protected/rothkopf.html>

Therefore, to have a better understanding over the entire political debate, four public speeches held by David Cameron are analyzed taking use of the research method *critical discourse analysis*, also referred as CDA.

### ***I. Critical Discourse Analysis Method (CDA)***

Wodak affirms, “Critical discourse analysis is an instrument whose purpose is to expose veiled power structures”.<sup>83</sup> More appropriate is that, according to Göran Bergström and Kristina Boréus, CDA promises a high relevance when dealing with public speeches in concern to political authority and power.<sup>84</sup>

The choice to make use of critical discourse analysis for this study is because it lies in CDA’s spectrum to deal with social problems, real issues such as social exclusion, shifts in governance, European integration, and so forth. Social problems which the British citizens do not take them for granted, therefore Cameron’s public speeches empower the people with the knowledge of knowing this way being favored with the choice of making the appropriate decision for UK’s future, and becoming part of the social set-up of British society. Another CDA major role is to raise the awareness of the hidden social structure of society among common people; trying to balance the societal inequalities by exposing the unknown agendas and privileging the people.

This research paper takes use of the critical discourse analysis directed to issues of authority and power. Thus, the CDA-method distinguishes three different analysis levels<sup>85</sup> when assessing over Conservative Party’s political public speeches, as follows:

*Diverse style* – referring here to David Cameron’s leadership style, assumptions and identity; it provides a general standpoint over prime minister’s own ‘style’ when addressing to its citizens. Therefore, he can be perceived in two different ways/styles, through the cultural perspective – Cameron being in his turn a British citizen it favors the way in which British people take into consideration his public messages; this perspective being absolutely in his own benefit. The other perspective is in D. Cameron’s detriment, when he holds public speeches among the strong euro skeptics.

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<sup>83</sup> Quotation of Wodak, R. – *Discourse of disorder*, Longman, London, (1996), 16

<sup>84</sup> Bergström, G. and Boréus, K. (red.) – *Textens Mening och Makt*, Metodbok i samhällsvetenskaplig text- och diskursanalys, (2012), 356

<sup>85</sup> Ibid. 392

The second CDA analysis level indicates the *speeches* held by Conservative Party – how is the British society mirrored/embodied by the Conservative Party in different sorts of political documentation.

*Genres* – in concerns over the language usage in the political speeches, conferences, campaigns, public debates related to any issue in cause. Genres commonly refer the way a message can be introduced to the world, and it is perceived. In this case, how does the Conservative Party deliver his messages among the citizens; for example the linguistic method how the referendum has been introduced, such as the campaigns David Cameron promotes during a period of time.

## ***II. Speech Results***

The empirical material for this study has been limited up to selecting public speeches in regards of Conservative Party, held by the British Prime Minister David Cameron. They have all been chosen on the basis that culture represents one influential aspect within EU politics – presented chronologically up to date, they form top-speeches of D. Cameron's conviction over the British values and norms' importance in society.

✚ We must let people rise (1)

As introductory speech, at 1:20 minute, David Cameron promotes his ideal view over the British nation, and his own beliefs for his citizens –

*“My job, our job is to make sure that in very this 21st century, as in the centuries that came before, our country Britain is on the rise! And here we know how is done, it is the collective result of individual effort and aspiration. The ideas you have, the businesses you start, the hours you put in, and aspiration is the engine of progress. Countries rise when they allow their people to rise/... and in this world where brains matter more, and technology shapes our lives, the most powerful resource we have is our people”<sup>86</sup>.*

By people, Cameron refers not only to the scientists, teachers, entrepreneurs, but even including the poorest, those who never had a chance for a better life. Therefore, he states that the *“mission for this government is to build one aspiration nation, to leash and unlock*

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<sup>86</sup> Channel4News – The Guardian, *David Cameron speech: we must let people rise*  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MTTfBb3mrFw> – Latest review October 10<sup>th</sup> 2012

*the promise in all our people*". Noticeably enough, within this speech, as well among the several others to be analyzed – "*national interest*" has not been a reference concept when David Cameron debates UK's position in EU. Where the word itself has not been mentioned at all during the entire speech, but rather replaced with an outstanding repetition of the word "*people*" and "*we*", together with the verbs "we can", "we want", and "we will".

Apparently, British society's determination is not lead by a hushed-up notion as national interest; at least not in the Conservative Party where the Prime Minister makes enormous efforts in explaining and informing Europe that UK's purposes/commitments are concentrated over what the people need, what the society needs, and less about UK's political position in the world.

#### 🚩 David Cameron's Heroic Speech At Tory Party Conference (2)

Under the promoted campaign "Britain can deliver", the British Prime Minister brings into discussion the ongoing Independence Referendum of Scotland's independence from the United Kingdom. Thus, an agreement has been signed by David Cameron and the First Minister of Scotland, Alex Salmond, providing this way a legal framework for the referendum to be hold Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014.<sup>87</sup> Significant speech, due to Cameron's continuous determination over what the conservative ideology stands for – expressing his strong desire to see UK in the future the same way the past British generations did, united.

Therefore, by the minute 1:45, Cameron proudly talks about one moment from the Olympics hold in London 2012, symbolizing what the British spirit is all about –

*"Whether they are Scottish, Welsh, English, or from Northern Ireland, they draped themselves in one flag.../ what is more important is saving our united Kingdom – so let's say it, we are better together, we will rise together, and let us fight that referendum<sup>88</sup> with everything we've got."<sup>89</sup>*

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<sup>87</sup> The Scottish Government official webpage  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2013/01/electoral-commission-report30012013>

<sup>88</sup> The Independence Referendum of Scotland will be hold by the end of 2014

Within the same speech, minute 2:55, the Prime Minister reflects again over what the British people value more, and are trustfully guided by – such as aspirations. Thus, it seems that once again the notion of national interest loses a vast space within the political Conservative debates. The Conservative Party's role in the British governance *“is not just an economic mission, it is not just about growth and GDP – it is what have always make our hearts beat faster: aspiration, people rising from the bottom to the top.”*

David Cameron brings into discussion one conference he participated in Brussels in December 2011 when debating one issue that was not in Britain's interest – while the other 25 countries around the table pointed to sign that treaty, he refused and vetoed that EU treaty. After one year later in October 2012, he reminds about this particular EU meeting, proving that the British cultural beliefs he holds remain strong along the years:

*“For years have passed we are unbeatable, we know Britain can deliver because we've seen it time and time again. This is the country that invented the computer, defeated the Nazis.../fought of every invader for a thousand years. We even persuaded the Queen to jump out off the helicopter to make the world smile. There's nothing we can't do.”*

### 🚩 Tribute to Margaret Thatcher (3)

This year of 2013 brings one honorific tribute to a powerful personality from the British political history, Margaret Thatcher, known on the political stage as “the Iron Lady”.<sup>90</sup> Therefore, through this master thesis I afford myself the opportunity to elevate her massive contribution in the world, in British political arena, as well within the Conservative Party; this relevant speech of David Cameron paid tribute in Margaret Thatcher's memory<sup>91</sup>:

*“ – I'm not a consensus politician but a conviction politician – /she got summed up these convictions linked profoundly with her up-bringing values in just a few short*

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<sup>89</sup> SkyNews – Youtube, Prime Minister David Cameron's Heroic Speech At the Tory Party Conference – <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/video/2013/apr/10/cameron-miliband-tribute-thatcher-video> – Latest Review October 10th 2012

<sup>90</sup> Margaret Thatcher (October 13, 1925 – April 8, 2013)– became Britain's Conservative Party leader and in 1979 was elected prime minister for more than eleven years (1979-90), a record unmatched in the twentieth century

<sup>91</sup> David Cameron speech tribute – *“Margaret Thatcher was our first and so far our only woman Prime Minister, she won three elections a row, serving this country for a longer continuous period than any Prime Minister for more than a hundred and fifty years.”*

*phrases – strong defense, liberty under the rule of law, you shouldn't spend what you haven't earned, governments doesn't create wealth, businesses do that".<sup>92</sup>*

By the end of his tribute, at 2:20 minute, the Prime Minister states the following –

*"...many of the principles Margaret Thatcher fought for, are now part of the accepted political landscape of our country.../ she made the political weather, she made history.../and that she made our country be great again".<sup>93</sup>*

Through the lenses of history, David Cameron's speech proved once again that the existing principles and values the British nation has, they signify the result of past generations. Those cultural principles of "up-bringing values" Cameron mentions, originate from the previous leaders' conviction – that people, together with their values, create the nation; it is culture that lies beneath politics before any national interest has ever existed. UK embodies one nation with a great history and principles that D. Cameron is guided by, and therefore he wishes that the British rooted values and beliefs will be maintained and successfully transferred from generation to generation.

#### ✚ David Cameron denies EU referendum plan is panic reaction to Eurosceptics (4)

When asked if he panicked when creating the referendum solution with the hope to calm down the Eurosceptics from his own party, David Cameron has absolutely denied, pointing the idea that throughout this referendum he shows he is the master leader of his own party, arguing:

*"When all the dust has settled, people will see I think very clearly that one party, the Conservative party is offering them that decisive change, that decisive choice in a referendum.../ This is what you'll get with the Conservative Party – you'll get the referendum that I think this country is ready to have."<sup>94</sup>*

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<sup>92</sup> ITN – The Guardian, *David Cameron and Ed Miliband pay tribute to Margaret Thatcher*  
<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/video/2013/apr/10/cameron-miliband-tribute-thatcher-video>  
Latest Review April 10<sup>th</sup> 2013

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Sky News – The Guardian, *David Cameron denies EU referendum plan is panic reaction to Eurosceptics*  
– <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2013/may/14/david-cameron-eu-referendum-eurosceptics> –  
Latest Review May 14<sup>th</sup> 2013

A final aspect worthy to be acknowledged about the promised referendum is that it consists of one simple question “*Do you think that the United Kingdom should remain a member of the European Union?*”, expecting a simple yes-no answer from the British people.

## **7.2 Survey Analysis – ‘UK culture in EU’**

Following a top-down evaluation, whereas the first part of speech analysis has clarified the British Conservative Party’s position when it comes to European Union; the survey method represents a secondary indicator of this research paper, promising to produce one comprehensive understanding of the British people culture and their own beliefs about the European Union. Additionally, the survey tries to be familiar over two aspects – to what extent does the British value merge with the European values, and what are the outlooks the British citizens expect from EU on a long run.

By ‘*culture*’ the survey refers to a *system of social control* where the citizens act according to the acknowledged methods of living in the society, such as values, customs, attitudes and beliefs. In addition, the survey sheds light into the learned ways how people respond to external factors, and the way they deal with different situations – as the ongoing controversial UK-EU situation, how do they respond to it.

Culture is often characterized as “*the values, attitudes, beliefs, and customs of a society*”.<sup>95</sup>

### **I. Survey Method**

Paul S. Gray strongly believes that the use of survey method is an extremely valuable one, due to its ability to produce “*a representative distribution, or cross section of the target population*”,<sup>96</sup> where data-gathering technique for this survey has been accomplished through both the paper-based and computer-based questionnaires.

Additionally, Paul S. Gray states that a survey should be designed in such a manner that by the end of it, the researcher is able to check “*the representativeness of the sample and to make statistical comparisons*”<sup>97</sup>. Thus, the format of the survey is composed of fifteen questions, divided into three groups – demographic data, cultural aspect and the European

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<sup>95</sup> Veltman, K. H. – *Why Culture is Important*, (1998), 76-82

<sup>96</sup> Gray, P. S. – *The Research Imagination: An Introduction to Qualitative and Quantitative Methods*, (2007), 122

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. 130

Union. Within the last part, a single open question has been provided for the respondents, where they could freely express own opinions about UK leaving EU.

For a wider perspective over the British culture, the survey has been addressed among a total number of 20 British respondents that have spent 'at least 90% of life in the United Kingdom'; the survey covers most parts of UK, from Edinburgh Scotland, Belfast Northern Ireland, Cambridge England, Birmingham England and so forth, whereas the major result percentage comes from London England.

The respondents' age group varies as well from 20 years old to over 60 years old, with a predominance among the age groups of 21-30 years old and 41-50 years old, out of which 5 male and 15 female. The other obtained demographical dates show that all the respondents hold a high level of education with 15 college degrees and 5 post-graduate degrees, where their occupational field is quite complex – as therapist, student, creative director (CEO), logistics manager, retired, nanny, receptionist, teacher, head teacher, and lecturer.

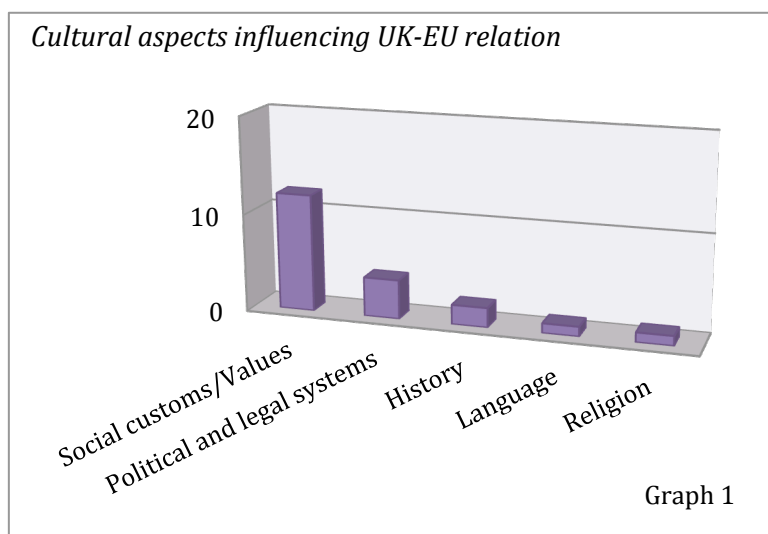
## ***II. Survey Results***

Surprisingly enough, survey's introductive question "*Do you believe that the British cultural norms, values and beliefs are different from the Europeans?*" – indicated a large majority of 13 respondents answering "to some extent", where the rest of 7 chose "to a large extent", out of the multiple-choice list. Closely linked with the introductive question, the following represents an affirmation – "Rank the following cultural aspects from most-to-least important to you when it comes to United Kingdom's complex relationship with the European Union" – whereas the following factors have been provided to the respondents to be ranked: religion, language, social customs/values, history, and not least, the political and legal systems' has been added to the list even though it does not particularly fit within the cultural factors. The respondents were asked to rank their answers from a scale of 1 up to 5, where 5 should be placed next to the most important cultural aspect, and so on with 4, 3, 2, and 1 placed next to the least important cultural aspect.

The existence of cultural factors which might influence to any extent the relation between two nations, is fundamental within foreign relations; though more emphasis should be put

over this matter – for a clear picture I have chosen to enhance the obtained results providing a column chart-graph based on the respondents’ answers (Graph 1).

*Graph 1* illustrates a well-elaborated interpretation from a total of 20 attained answers – more than half of those who completed the survey, precisely 12 respondents, consider that the most significant aspect affecting United Kingdom’s relation with European Union are the ‘social customs and values’;



Immediately followed by a drastic decrease of only 4 answers indicating that ‘political and legal systems’ are causing the ongoing UK-EU situation; ‘history’ gained 2 votes, followed by ‘language’ together with ‘religion’ with 1 vote each.

The notion of “value” has always been associated with the notion of “culture”, due to the fact that they both worship and symbolize society’s social norms, and where the citizens follow those norms. Nevertheless, the concept of “value” has its integral meaning, contemplated in the EU Treaty, Article 6, paragraph 1, as defined:

*“The Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States”; followed by paragraph 2 – “The Union shall respect fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms signed in Rome on 4 November 1950 and as they result from the constitutional conditions common to the Member States, as general principles of Community law.”<sup>98</sup>*

<sup>98</sup> The official webpage of The European Union (2002) – *The Consolidated version of the Treaty on the European Union* – [http://eurlex.europa.eu/en/treaties/dat/12002M/htm/C\\_2002325EN.000501.html](http://eurlex.europa.eu/en/treaties/dat/12002M/htm/C_2002325EN.000501.html)

An outstanding evidence how the British people cherish their values, their social customs, and able to avoid the external factors outside the borders to interfere within their society; apparently, the British nation worships what has been build throughout the history and they keen to keep the security feeling as being on the isolated splendid island. Yet, these results could associate the British beliefs with other past great leaders' view, which have been guided by the very same principles of values, as the US President Theodore Roosevelt contemplated and cherished the nation's values above any other matters –

*“Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, and cherish the history and romance as a sacred heritage, for your children and your children's children. Do not let selfish men or greedy interests skin your country of its beauty, its riches or its romance.”<sup>99</sup>*

Staying within the same spectrum of culture, the survey has addressed a second ranking-affirmation, asking the respondents to rank which ‘role in society’ they consider is associated with UK's possible willingness to withdraw from the EU – where an extreme result of 17 votes out of 20 ‘strongly agreed’ that ‘the role of values/beliefs’ is the major reason for British initiative of exiting the Union.

Summing up survey's three questions in concerns with the cultural aspect (see Annex), one ultimate conclusion gains the highest credit – British people believe that the values they share, together with the cultural norms, are ‘different to some/and large extent’ from the Europeans’. This statement is based on the obtained responses from an overwhelming number of 20 votes out of 20; where the values have been identified as the main factor that might affect UK-EU relation, with 12 votes. Repeatedly, the notion of ‘value’ gained highest support, 17 times, and it represents UK's central reason for their withdrawal from the Union.

The third part of the questionnaire is entirely dedicated to European Union matters and UK – the answers showing that 45% of the respondents ‘are in favor of UK membership in EU’, 20% are against it, other 20% do not care about the current situation, and not last, 15% preferred answering instead ‘I do not know’.

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<sup>99</sup> Quotation of Theodore Roosevelt, in The Guardian  
<http://www.theguardian.pe.ca/Opinion/Letters-to-editor/2013-03-15/article-3200140/Majority-of-hunters-are-heartfelt-conservationists/1>

Ultimately, one open-question has been allocated to the respondents, giving the possibility to freely express their opinions related to the matter in cause – UK as an EU member, or as a partner outside the EU. The answer has been guided with a provided multiple-answer list; once selecting the answer you agreed more upon, you could further, optionally, offer a brief opinion. In essence, the question was trying to find out what exactly brought UK to this close point of exiting from EU. Statistically, an overwhelming of 70% respondents have indicated that certain ‘issue-specific interests (such as economics)’ have driven UK’s political decision of leaving EU, while the other 30% believe that ‘history related issues’, ‘general geopolitical ideas and interests’ and ‘cultural beliefs’ might have caused UK’s determination in becoming a non-EU member.

The economics reasonings seems to occupy a larger segment in UK. Additional statistics show that as far as UK trade is concerned – in the last decade, 54% of UK’s entire trade is made within the EU has grown. However, the British trade with the rest of the world has increased 105%,<sup>100</sup> and this last results occurred during the same period as with the EU. So it seems unclear if Britain is better off out the EU or not.

The open-question has apparently shaken up the British spirit among the respondents, therefore their answers have been a collection of issue-reasonings. Below I will try emphasize the ones I found most relevant towards UK-EU relationship.

From the economics perspective, several respondents put emphasis over the British government wanting more independent power ‘*to keep their citizens in subjection*’, as well they keen on keeping control of the financial and other markets, and generally ‘*suspicious of the motives of the rest of Europe, partly because of the island mentality*’ mentioned two respondents from Birmingham, England.

Embracing the above respondent’s reasoning of ‘island mentality’, it commonly refers to the British nation and their mentality of being distant to the European boundaries, basically due to their isolated geographical position forming no European borders to the United Kingdom. Nonetheless, when it comes down to UK wanting leave EU, the island mentality is being strongly linked with the historical issues as one respondent from London England made it clear as crystal –

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<sup>100</sup> Channel 4News, 2012 November 22<sup>nd</sup>

<http://www.channel4.com/news/what-would-the-uk-be-like-outside-the-eu>

*“Perhaps the most influential factor on the British Psyche for the past millennium is the sea that protects us from foe, diseases, and unwanted influence. The very thought of people invading England through social or geopolitical methods is almost as tough to bear as physical action”.*

The sea has also been the most important asset for the Brits enabling them to project power around the world way beyond their physical size and strength and making them one of the most important trading nations throughout history. Even today through financial trading. The same English respondent insisted highlighting his reasoning over the cultural aspect –

*“We now consider the influence of Europe to be invading the fabric of our culture and values which have been hard fought to won. It may sound stupid but all those of current voting age still have parents/grandparents that fought in the war or were evacuated/ influenced by it. If we now let Europeans influence the future of the nation it feels as if we are undoing the sacrifices that have been made. One day this will be forgotten perhaps but now, even if it’s not the right decision we want to be in charge of our own future.”<sup>101</sup>*

Having to draw a concluding line after the statistical data together with the analyzed open questions, Britain seems to feel as a ‘*special case for whatever reason*’, as one respondent from Oswestry (age group 51-60 years old) affirmed; however this cannot be taken into serious account when debating matters as foreign politics.

Since the survey’s total purpose was to discover how the British people perceive culture among a Union with 28 different states, and if their culture merge with the European ones, the final conclusion will be left into respondents’ hands – because they are the central matter of this research paper, and their opinion is what counts most – one respondent over her 60 years old from Birmingham, living nowadays in Worcester, stated –

*“Each EU Member Country is different and Diversity is a Strength for Progress which uniformity stifles”*

What is of particular interest from the resulting survey data are those respondents who specifically answered on a defensive side for culture as being an important factor for UK’s possible withdrawing from EU; or whether scores differ, that economics for example is a

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<sup>101</sup> Quotation of survey respondent, creative director (CEO) from London England, current location in Bonn Germany

major factor for the complexity of this situation – both alternative results indicate the existence of ‘class interests’ providing a larger overview how they could influence the current political situation when taking part of the promised referendum by the end of 2017.

Thus, when answering the simple question of “Do you think that the United Kingdom should remain a member of the European Union?” – those on the defensive side of culture might say a ‘no’ vote, in favor for UK leaving EU; while those who believe the economical factor is in UK’s benefit will probably have a ‘yes’ vote, in favor for UK staying in EU, placing the national interest above the cultural values.

*“Putting all nations under one rule does not always work”.*<sup>102</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The conducted survey reached a better insight where does the British culture stand, when facing the European integration phenomenon. Noticeably, whatever the outcome, the survey is likely to generate a range of further questions over the British cultural relationships with the European Union.

It is clear that the question of Britain remaining in the EU will not be answered in the short-term. Whether you class yourself as Eurosceptic or Europhile, David Cameron proves his determination in maintaining an equilibrium among both sides, allowing his people to have a say over UK’s membership in Union. Perhaps it is not the right time to declare one EU referendum, but with the UKIP in the wings, the Conservative Party faces massive pressure from them, from his own, and from the society as well – therefore occurs the question ‘when is the right time if not now?’

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<sup>102</sup> Quotation of cultural survey respondent, teacher, current location in London, England

## 8. Brussels, We Have a Problem: Euroscepticism on the Rise

*“Eurocrat, make use of your tie!”<sup>103</sup>*

This section highlights the existing lack of interest for EU matters among a vast number of societies; it provides relevant statistical results over member states’ credibility towards the grand project of European Union, together with their long-term expectations about it.

For the first time, since 2010, the number of Eurosceptics, which do not trust the EU project, exceeded the number of those who trust the EU. Consequently, a vast number of people started observe no gains from being member of the EU; and the European Commission started notice the increased gap between citizens and the EU. Lately, this gap began to be felt among Brussels servants who found stickers on their cars – illustrating a man who used his tie to hang himself, having the following note aside: *“Eurocrat, make use of your tie!”* These form of ‘attacks’ have always existed, nonetheless, since the outbreak of the eurocrisis, the public servants started notice an increased number of incidents of this kind. Eventually, the EU believers began to have their own doubts as well, showing a decreased level of trust over all the EU institutions.<sup>104</sup>

A very recent research released by Pew Research Global Attitudes Project in 2013 May 13<sup>th</sup>, names the European Union as ‘The new sick man of Europe’<sup>105</sup>. Despite the great effort that has been put over the past half century, to create a more united Europe, it appears that the European project caused a widespread dispute across several of the European member states. Pew Research Center has provided valuable statistical results illustrating the very current opinions, beliefs among the European member states; few of the most important ones related below.

A first raised point concerns the wicked economic performance within the European Union (please see below *Graph 2*); where eight of the surveyed countries, Germany, Britain, France, Italy, Spain, Greece, Poland and Czech Republic have showed a low support for the European economic integration with a -6% difference from 2012 to 2013.

Graph 2

<sup>103</sup> Presseurop, 2012 July 19<sup>th</sup>

<http://www.presseurop.eu/en/content/article/2370781-there-s-place-euro-heretics-too>

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Pew Research Center, 2013 May 13<sup>th</sup> – *The New Sick Man of Europe: the European Union*

<http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/05/13/the-new-sick-man-of-europe-the-european-union/>

**Decline in Support for the European Project**

	<i>Economic integration strengthened economy</i>			<i>Favorable of EU</i>		
	2012	2013	Change	2012	2013	Change
	%	%		%	%	
Germany	59	54	-5	68	60	-8
Britain	30	26	-4	45	43	-2
France	36	22	-14	60	41	-19
Italy	22	11	-11	59	58	-1
Spain	46	37	-9	60	46	-14
Greece	18	11	-7	37	33	-4
Poland	48	41	-7	69	68	-1
Czech Rep.	31	29	-2	34	38	+4
<b>MEDIAN</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>-6</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>-15</b>

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q9f &amp; Q31.

In addition, the International Monetary Fund expects for the European Union to face no economy grow at all during 2013, and to further perform its pre-crisis until 2018.

As an anticipated reaction, the Southern nations, Italy, Spain and Greece become even more unsatisfied and economically frustrated over the economic system unfairness along Brussels and Berlin.

Most of the countries started to be concerned over their state economy, where just 3% of the Italians, 4% of the Spanish, just 1% of Greeks and 9% of the French citizens believe their economy is good; in contrast with the 75% of Germans satisfied of their economic conditions. Remarkably enough, Spain holds the biggest decrease of positive sentiment about their economy with a difference of -61% between 2007 (65%) and 2013 (4%). Straight after, Britain follows with a 54% difference of positive sentiment between nowadays, 2013 (when 15% of citizens believe the British economy is good) and 2007 (when 69% of citizens believed the British economy has been better/good).<sup>106</sup> Looking at the future, the Europeans seem to have the same skeptical attitude.

In concerns to 'Britain's withdrawal from the Union', the Pew Research Center has come upon some remarkable percentages among their citizens – when asked about their economy only 26% of the Britons think that being a EU-member has been a good think for their economy; where just 43% of the British public expressed a positive view about the European Union.

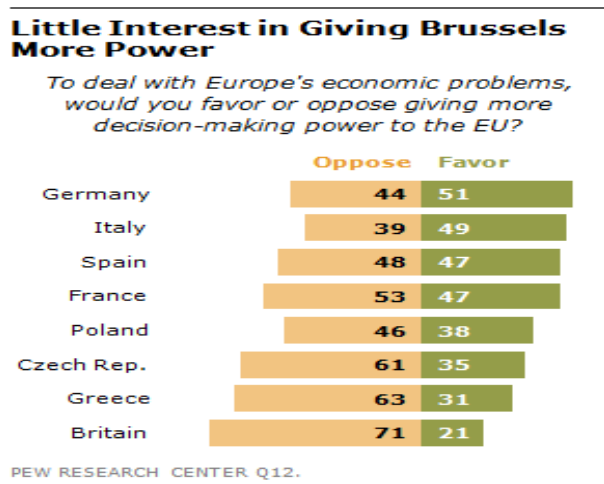
However, the British, who by the end of 2017 will hold an in/out referendum on continuing the EU membership, deals with an equal number of votes on leaving the EU, with 46% saying yes in favor of UK's membership in EU, and 46% saying no.

<sup>106</sup> Pew Research Center, 2013 May 13<sup>th</sup> – *The New Sick Man of Europe: the European Union*  
<http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/05/13/the-new-sick-man-of-europe-the-european-union/>

States’ leaders are dealing with an unpleasant decreased percentage of citizens losing faith in their capacity how to cope with the ongoing euro crisis. In UK the results indicated that nowadays fewer British citizens (37%) than last year (51%) think David Cameron does a good job within the European spectrum – a total decrease of -14% confidence in the Prime Minister.<sup>107</sup>

Once again we observe the restrain UK conserves when it comes to the capital of Brussels, this time due for not giving more decision-making authority to the European Union – thus, United Kingdom placed itself in the very end of the list (please see *Graph 3*) with a fully 71% opposing in giving more political power towards Brussels.<sup>108</sup>

Graph 3



Where a larger number of conservatives share the very same sentiment, with 82% from the right of political stage being against the centralization of authority within EU. Moving forward to Greece with 63% against placing more decision-making to EU, as well more than half (53%) of the French public.

Nevertheless, despite the long list of disillusionment within the European project, there are some good news when taking into consideration the support for the Euro, the common currency among 17 member states out of the 27. According to the Pew Research Global Attitudes Project more than six Europeans-out of-ten prefer Euro to remain their currency in Italy (64%), Spain (67%), Greece (69%), Germany (66%), and in France (63%).<sup>109</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Pew Research Center, 2013 May 13<sup>th</sup> – *The New Sick Man of Europe: the European Union*  
<http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/05/13/the-new-sick-man-of-europe-the-european-union/>

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

## 8.1 Gains or Losses from EU Membership?

The membership of the European Union has been mediatized for a long time now, described as a tension between politicians and the citizens. Nonetheless, turning our attention over the paper's dominant membership, the British one – the Prime Minister David Cameron believes that holding the EU membership, Britain will maintain significant gains in terms of economy, security, and also power, having a word to say over formal decision making. This way allowing UK to embrace certain authority in influencing EU in terms of British benefits; more than that, EU membership guarantees a better balanced relation of UK with the United States and the emerging powers – exemplifying one significant gain that UK achieves from its commitment within the Union. Pro-Europeans believe that over time, British people will begin to be more responsive over EU's importance.

On the other side, the losses of being outside the EU have build a quite long list as well, picturing that one awkward situation will keep continue among the British parties in concern to their domestic debates. According to Dr. Tim Oliver's article published in SWP's International Security Division, starting from the above argument, that with UK's withdrawal, the awkward situation will last within the British government – he has identified eight sharp problems explaining that life outside the EU won't embody a total positive aspect for UK, rather a negative one.<sup>110</sup>

- First, abandoning any relation with the EU, including the European Economic Area the economy will most probably get significantly damaged. In this matter, even the Eurosceptics are backing up, assuming the negative consequences UK might suffer outside the EU.
- Still, as an outsider partner, EU will remain UK's largest and most important external relation; implying even wider separation than what exist now between UK and the US. UK will be facing a large number of limitations and frustrations in choosing any relationship or influence it wanted.
- The Eurosceptics will have to bare a lot of disappointment even outside the EU. There is a long way until European influence will stop being felt in British politics. UK simply cannot just return to their 1973s status quo.

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<sup>110</sup> Pew Research Center, 2013 May 13<sup>th</sup> – *The New Sick Man of Europe: the European Union*  
<http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/05/13/the-new-sick-man-of-europe-the-european-union/>

- Europe will continue to represent a powerful 'other' in relation to UK's politics and society, while Britain struggles in separating from Carwell's "European corpse".<sup>111</sup>
- UK will face a direct fall-down, losing its influence towards Europe, the United States, and the other entire Western world. With other words, it will get to a decline point within the international arena, being at the mercy of others' decisions.
- Once leaving the EU, a growing tension will arise within UK's intergovernmental politics as well, between those who voted to stay in and those who preferred to leave. Undoubtedly, Scotland topic will increase even more, being already a concern for UK; having London on the other side, the heart of British economy – that is likely in favor for remaining in the EU; and here there are, already two vast boiling debates that will certainly boost once UK exits EU.
- In the case where the 2015 referendum will take place, calls for a second referendum is possible to be hold, in order to have a final say in approving the withdrawal from the European Union.
- The eighth loss outside the EU represents the Europeanization phenomenon that is nowadays present in the British business market; this will cause significant difficulties for the businesses to deal with the regulations and norms at the European and international level.

The United Kingdom holds high gains and strong financial power being part of the EU, by the simple fact that London represents Europe's leading trading point, while the British economy receives gains from both of their imports and exports. Despite the pros and strong arguments of Britain staying in Europe, apparently the rest of Europe wonders and get down to the question 'why are the British so skeptical towards EU?' when being EU member, particularly UK, represents a guaranteed benefit.

The *conclusion* is well defined – leaving the EU won't settle a complete ending over the interdependence between UK and the European continent. Additionally, agreeing over a rating scale stereotype generated by Pew Research Global Attitude Project, Britain has apparently received from both France and Germany the stereotype status of 'last compassionate' among the European member states.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Pew Research Center, 2013 May 13<sup>th</sup> – *The New Sick Man of Europe: the European Union*  
<http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/05/13/the-new-sick-man-of-europe-the-european-union/>

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

## 9. Conclusion

Ultimately, this part of the thesis consists of a final conclusion based on the findings presented above, providing two concessive answers for both of the initial research questions; also a brief discussion will be held about the outcomes along the entire research paper.

By far, this paper work can be contemplated as one predictable alternative for other European states as well, acting in favor for a potential withdrawal from the EU. It is important to remember that a ‘withdrawal’ action might be ‘hushed up’ in front of the public eyes by a strong national interest reasoning; but always to keep in mind the fact that beneath the national interest it might prevail a stronger reasoning – the cultural influence, just as it happens in the British case.

### 9.1 Summary of Findings

One of the most remarkable characteristics of culture seems to be its ‘uniqueness’ – culture promotes and develops a ‘We-feeling’. To gain a clear picture over the notions of culture, citizens, society, politics, national interest, the EU, and all the other findings of this research – the two initiated research questions that have guided the entire study work are being answered below:

- Does culture influence the political decisions taken in Britain in regards to the EU?  
// Is there a linkage between culture and the rise of Euroscepticism?

After a deepen analysis along this research paper, Britain’s national interest reveals intensely shaped by its past. Through certain cultural lenses, British politics is been influenced *“by memories of empire and global power, victory in the Second World War, a sense that separation and independence – mixed with commitment to the Atlantic alliance – have served the UK, where joining the EU was seen as an abdication of a wider role.”*<sup>113</sup>

Apparently, there exists a clear linkage between culture and Euroscepticism, having Britain’s case in-between – whereas in its aftermaths, stresses the key aspect of UK’s attempt in exiting the Union. Europe is changing with an accelerated speed, and dealing with the current Euro zone crisis, many people started feel that EU is heading to some unknown and uncertain direction they did not sign up to. This is the reason why the

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<sup>113</sup> SWP, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Tim L. Oliver, 2013 May 14<sup>th</sup> – *Why an In-Out Referendum Won’t Settle the European Question in British Politics*  
[http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-comments-en/swp-aktuelle-details/article/britains\\_european\\_question.html](http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-comments-en/swp-aktuelle-details/article/britains_european_question.html)

Conservative Manifesto for 2015 has promised to renegotiate a new settlement for Britain in the EU – this can only be accomplished if a new Conservative government will be elected in 2015. In this case, the Conservatives promise to renegotiate – the British people can make their voices heard answering the simple question “*Do you think the UK should remain a member of the European Union?*” offering a yes-no answer.

Overall, culture can be understood as a dependent (output) or independent (input) variable, though in the same time it can be perceived as an entire process of changing society’s ongoing difficulties – “*the way that a group of people solves problems and reconciles dilemmas.*”<sup>114</sup>

However, the real concern comes in finding a more diplomatic way in which cultures can be better accepted and perceived among the 28 member states. This significant matter should raise certain awareness for the city of Brussels, and start to better inform the European citizens over EU actions, policies, and so forth – creating this way a lifelong bridge between the member states, providing ‘reservoir of support in times of crisis’. “*You know you’re going through crisis with any country around the world. You’re going to have confrontation, but you need to be able to sustain that, to sustain yourself through that, and to build that across time is really the important mission for any public diplomacy program to be effective*”.<sup>115</sup>

- To be, or not to be in the European Union?

Summing up the overall statements held by the Prime Minister David Cameron in his speeches, this research question might be best answered by Cameron’s concluding affirmation: “*If we left the European Union, it would be one-way ticket, not a return. So we will have time for a proper, reasoned debate. At the end of that debate, you, the British people, will decide.*”<sup>116</sup>

The British case stands as the fundamental example for this study paper, (closely linked with the first research question) clarifying UK’s desire of leaving the European political scene and becoming a non-EU member. It highlights that EU membership causes certain

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<sup>114</sup> Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997, from Baldwin, J. R., Faulkner, S. L., Hecht, M. L., and Lindsley, S. L. – *Redefining Culture – Perspectives Across the Disciplines*, (2006), 97

<sup>115</sup> Quotation of Shibley Telhami, PBS NewsHour  
[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/media/jan-june05/hughes\\_3-16.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/media/jan-june05/hughes_3-16.html)

<sup>116</sup> Quotation of the British Prime Minister David Cameron  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/eu-speech-at-bloomberg>

changes over a state's status quo, producing tension within the government and society so it can adjust after a new system.

A state's national interest often appears in mass media as the cause for certain political decisions; thus it is important to highlight that state's national interest evolves in time within the nation, and does not represent society's foundation – it is '*culture*' and nation's values which established the substance of every existing generation.

## **Discussion**

Writing this master thesis has been both challenging and interesting. I encountered an overflow of sources and viewpoints causing difficulties to scrutinize through the useful information from the less useful information. Apparently, same phenomenon seems to reflect the relation the European Union holds with its citizens – there are enormous amounts of information that EU delivers; and yet, the citizens seem to have no clear idea of what is really 'going on'.

When starting the research, I wanted to find out whether culture has influence among Europe's politics and if so, to what extent. While pursuing analysis, my interest shifted as I started to ask myself a fusion of questions: What could culture actually 'influence' within the Union, and why is so important to be aware over the cultural aspect. And eventually what is best for those nations who joined the EU – rather changing nation's status quo and following the new EU norms and regulations they signed up for, or in certain cases due to the cultural believes, the government prefers in maintaining nation's status quo and is better off out the EU arena.

## **Final Conclusions**

Still, in regards to the cultural sector, I consider that culture is the background that creates the national interest – in its turn – it is difficult to asset what is the national interest if you do not take into consideration culture.

Drawing a conclusion line in concerns to UK-EU debate, I find myself either in total sympathy, either in contradiction of UK's potential withdrawal from the Union. Nevertheless, to a larger extent I tend to agree with a major part of David Cameron's statements – thus, I believe that renegotiating Britain's position in EU, it will only bring to surface the benefits the British society would gain within the Union, because after all they

are an European nation with a long cultural/economic history. I also hope that through the already initiated 2017 EU referendum, a common agreement for both British sides will occur, allowing Eurosceptic and Europhile to have their say – and that more of them will start believe for a win-win situation. However, I think that leaving the Union, British society will inevitable face a bigger challenge they could predict – and it will be interesting to watch how UK will start renegotiating with the large global trading blocks, and how much will they spend for this renegotiation to happen, until hopefully will compete with those trading powers.

On the other side, it is unquestionable the profound concern Nigel Farage and those from UKIP hold, and therefore keen to keep Britain safe and sound from what the grand EU project might generate on a long-term perspective.

The very famous and classic line *“To be, or not to be”* – appropriate for its subtle philosophical interpretation, denotes the on-going UK-EU debate; the British citizens struggling with the current social and political situation in the past years. Paradoxically, the same as the notorious British personality William Shakespeare questioned the meaning of life – the United Kingdom wonders over the meaning of EU project –

*“Whether ’tis nobler in the mind to suffer”  
“Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;  
No more; and by a sleep to say we end”<sup>117</sup>*

Eventually, the United Kingdom has to decide whether to remain active part in the European experiment, or instead to withdraw and shout from the sidelines. It is apparent the fact that UK is not an enthusiastic member of this grand EU project, and further on, the eventual referendum of 2017 could ultimately lead Britain to an exit from Europe. In that case, I can only hope the Brits are being fully aware of the saying ‘be careful what you wish for, it might just happen’.

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<sup>117</sup> William Shakespeare’s play *Hamlet*, Act III, Scene 1, (1623), Art of Europe  
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**Annex****Survey***Research for Master Thesis in European Studies*

*Project description:* I am a second year graduate student at Lund University Sweden, working on my dissertation in European studies in regards to the cultural aspect within EU agenda. Furthermore, aiming to demonstrate to what extent does the British values merge with the European values, and how does the British culture merge with EU's future expectations.

*Project abstract:* The purpose of the survey promises to produce one comprehensive understanding of the British citizens culture, and their beliefs towards the European Union.

Throughout the cultural perspective – this survey tries to reach a consolidated insight of culture with a special concern over the European integration phenomenon followed by United Kingdom's interest in withdrawing from EU.

The survey format has 15 questions, and the completion action takes approximately 10 minutes.

***Demographic Data***

1. Age:
  - under 20 years old
  - 21-30
  - 31-40
  - 41-50
  - 51-60
  - over 60 years old
2. Gender:
  - Female
  - Male
3. What country/and city were you born in?
4. The current country/and city of living.
5. Have you lived at least 90% of your life in the city in which you were born/or in United Kingdom? Please provide a yes/no answer for both alternatives:
  - City
  - UK
6. What is your highest level of formal education?
 

Choose one of the following answers:  less or some high school/  high school diploma/  college degree /  post graduate degree –master/  doctoral degree-PhD/ other
7. Occupation (optional)
8. Name (optional)

***Cultural Aspect***

9. Do you believe that British cultural norms, values, or beliefs are different from the Europeans? Please select a single answer.
- a) To a large extent
  - b) To a moderate extent
  - c) To some extent
  - d) To little extent
  - e) Not at all
10. Rank the following cultural aspects from most-to-least important to you when it comes to United Kingdom's complex relationship with the European Union. Place a '5' next to the most important cultural aspect, and so on with 4, 3, 2, and a '1' next to the least important cultural aspect.
- \_\_\_ Religion
  - \_\_\_ Language
  - \_\_\_ Political and legal systems
  - \_\_\_ Social customs/values
  - \_\_\_ History
11. Which of the following would you agree is associated with UK's possible willingness to withdraw from the European Union?  
Please rate your answers from a scale of 1 up to 5, where: *5-strongly agree*, *4-agree*, *3-neither agree or disagree*, *2-disagree*, and *1-strongly disagree*. (same rating scale can be repeated)  
Tips: Rate your feelings as quickly as possible (whatever your first thoughts were is what counts):
- \_\_\_ The role of Citizen
  - \_\_\_ The role of Culture
  - \_\_\_ The role of State Government
  - \_\_\_ The role of Values/Beliefs
  - \_\_\_ The idea of 'splendid isolated island'

***European Union***

12. Are you in favor of the UK membership in the EU?
- a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) I do not care
  - d) I do not know

13. Are you aware/updated of the current political relationship between UK and EU, of becoming a non-EU member?
- a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) I do not care
  - d) I do not know
14. In terms of trade and capital movements – Do you consider UK's island geographical position represents a strong variable in determining less interest for EU trade market?  
Please select a single answer.
- a) To a large extent
  - b) To a moderate extent
  - c) To some extent
  - d) To little extent
  - e) Not at all
15. Do you consider that the ongoing British political actions concerning EU were driven by the following:
- a) General geopolitical ideas and interests
  - b) Cultural beliefs
  - c) Issue-specific interests (such as economics)
  - d) History related issues (such as imperialism case)
- you may choose a single answer/multiple answer; please provide a brief explanation along your selected answer as well.

Thank you for your time!

//Simona