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MA History Thesis: Archival Studies

**Archiving Digital Diaspora in the Context of the EU Citizen
Expats Living in the UK and Their Notions of Belonging During
the Process of Brexit.**

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Introduction

When my country joined the EEA in 1994 I came here to study and work. I finished my postgraduate, and was all set to happily go home when practically in the last five minutes I met my British husband. So I stayed.

Family circumstances meant that we could never really consider moving to my country. I built a life here, had two beautiful daughters, studied for a PhD and embarked on a successful career. Won't consider dual citizenship because my country won't allow it, and I don't want to burn all bridges. Have applied for PR, but unfortunately, Royal Mail have lost my application, so no idea how this story is going to end. I no longer sleep because of worry.

I am also so extremely upset because of the nature of information that needs to be submitted. So much private detail – how much money I have earned, what's in my bank account, what is my house worth, what did the NHS write to me about... To think that, since it is presumed missing, all this is accessible to strangers and potentially in unauthorised hands makes me feel quite ill.

Kristina Standeven, Austria.¹

This is my mother's Brexit testimony published by the In Limbo Project (ILP) run by a subgroup of EU citizens living in the UK, who campaign against the result of the EU referendum that took place on the 23rd of June 2016 in the UK - hereafter referred to as "Brexit". This group indicates that to depart from the EU would change the lives of over three million EU citizens. These expatriates are not only anxious about what happens after the withdrawal from the EU, but they indicate feelings of betrayal and rejection within society during the process of Brexit and through their online activities.

My mother, a proud Austrian citizen married to my father - a UK citizen - has lived in the UK for over 24 years. Shortly after the referendum result, she applied for settled status only to have 3.6 kg of

¹ Elena Remigi, *In Limbo: Brexit testimonies from EU citizens in the UK* (California: CreateSpace, 2017) p. 89.

original documents lost: Her marriage certificate, PhD award, bank statements, wage slips, bills, and her national identity card. The documents were found three months later, all the while lying dormant in the UK Home Office, who denied ever having received them in the first place.

This thesis explores two related topics; firstly, how expatriates such as these EU citizens establish notions of belonging within society concerning exclusion and inclusion in light of Brexit through enthusiastic digital diaspora, such as sharing and documenting their stories on online blogs and social media; and secondly, if the content produced by expatriates through digital diaspora should be preserved and protected properly by information professionals with the use of appropriate and modern digital archival procedures. In order to inquire into the nature of expats' online networking, notions of belonging, and the procedures that would involve archiving their digital activity, this thesis will ask the question: To what extent do expatriate communities establish notions of belonging through digital diaspora? And, why, how, and who, could responsibly archive this digital content? Furthermore, by looking into the EU expats' notions of belonging, this thesis aims to contribute to the discipline of digital diaspora by adding an original case study to the topic of expat communities that engage in online networking. This thesis also aims to calculate the importance of archiving digital content generated by expat communities by investigating its historical and societal significance, and, how this content may be advantageous to the EU citizens' communal legacy.

This introduction aims to explain the process towards answering the main question by providing a comprehension on the necessary background information of the main concepts used, and a template of the type of research and analysis that will take place within this thesis. I will begin by providing some context to Brexit and why it held political implications for EU citizens, and why I chose the EU citizens living in the UK as a case study for this research. Then, since there is dispute over the term "expatriate", I will input a historiography of debates surrounding the different definitions on expatriates from different perspectives that cover a range of disciplines. This thesis, however, does not claim to solve the problem of finding a general definition of the term, instead it aims to use the debate to identify the particularities of the EU citizen expats. Then, this introduction will provide a brief overview of the primary and secondary sources that will assist this thesis on research and analysis, and the advantages and disadvantages of using such materials. Finally, this introduction will provide a methodological outline on how the chapters within this thesis will be structured.

Before explaining the EU citizen case study, I will begin by clarifying my participation within this piece of work - as the daughter of an EU expatriate living in the UK affected by Brexit, I have come

to recognise the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion regarding the EU citizens and political events as an important part of history. However, I will establish a distance from my own personal issues linked to the subject of Brexit, since this gap will allow me to explore the scholarly questions and debates associated with the subject of archiving digital content created by expatriates. Scholarly viewpoints have inspired me to venture into the ideas surrounding the importance of good and bad archiving, and the sudden change in digital behaviour of the EU citizens two days succeeding the EU referendum.

Now, to provide some context around the urgency and uniqueness of the digital behaviour of the EU citizens, I will provide some information on the political background that led to the UK's vote for Brexit, and the implications that these events cause for the EU citizens. The referendum was called on by the former UK Prime Minister David Cameron, who won the 2010 general election.² On the 9th of October 2015, "Vote Leave" a campaign to leave the EU was launched.³ Cameron advocated to remain in the EU and resigned the day after the referendum result. Theresa May succeeded Cameron as Prime Minister but resigned on June 7th, 2019 after negotiating with the EU for a withdrawal agreement, but then having it rejected three times by the House of Commons.⁴

It is worth considering the reasons why the British public voted to leave the EU, because it puts into perspective the response of EU expats and their notions of belonging, and how these ideas may be politically motivated. In *Taking back control? Investigating the role of immigration in the 2016 vote for Brexit*, political scientist Matthew Goodwin, and author Catlin Milazzo, discuss how attitudes towards immigration and ethnic change played a role in shaping the voting behaviour leading up to the referendum. This will be discussed more extensively in the first chapter of this thesis, and how drastic political changes may have prompted concern in EU expat communities online, and their notions of belonging.

In relation to my mother's story, many EU citizens reacted towards Brexit by promptly apply for settled status to maintain their right to reside in the UK. However, the reputation of the Home Office has been under considerable scrutiny for some time. Stephen Doughty MP raised concerns that: "The Home Office has a shocking history of losing documents from passports to identity papers which I

² Investopedia, Brexit (2019), < <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/brexit.asp> > [accessed 24 July 2019].

³ Tim Shipman, *ALL OUT WAR* (London: William Collins, 2016).

⁴ Investopedia, Brexit (2019), < <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/brexit.asp> > [accessed 24 July 2019].

flagged up as early as 2013.”⁵ This quote came from a 2018 online article published by the Guardian, with the headline reading *Vital immigration papers lost by UK Home Office*.⁶ It becomes clear that my mother is not the only one who has experienced such disappointment. In the same article, Bethan Lant who works with migrants says that they are scared to apply for settled status from hearing such horror stories; she explains: “They’re very anxious about the application in the first place. And now the body that is responsible for looking after their applications has now lost the documents. It causes a lot of anxiety”, and “We get lots of clients who are reluctant to send their original documents to the Home Office because everyone knows a story of someone who has had a document lost.”⁷

Based on these events and concerns, I reason that many EU expats experience anxiety from the loss of such valuable and personal documentation. This thesis aims to further understand how the UK government and society affects the experiences of these EU citizens regarding exclusion and inclusion, and in which ways they build upon these notions of belonging through digital diaspora.

In order to understand the idiosyncrasy of the EU citizens living in the UK as expats, it is important to comprehend the term “expatriate”. Different definitions of expatriates, however, exist within different disciplines. For example, some scholars may take a historical approach to defining an expat, whereas others may discuss expats in an economical context. I will begin with historian Nancy Green, who depicts the term expatriate as an aged phenomenon that has changed over time. Green begins her article by explaining how citizenship alludes to a sense of belonging in one’s place of origin dating back to ancient Rome. Since the very oldest societies, citizenship has been granted to those through the rights of being born in a place, or, through their blood relations, e.g. parents having resided in the country.⁸ Green explains how the laws of many modern societies also embrace similar rights to these. However, Green highlights that due to the increase of geographical movement, individuals may call both their birthplace, and the country they currently reside as their permanent home. This causes complications when defining one’s identity,⁹ for if there can only be one, which one do they belong to? The term expatriation can depend upon whether it is the individual who voluntarily moves, or, if they are banished by the state which derived from the original definition

⁵ Jamie Grierson and Sarah Marsh, ‘Vital immigration papers lost by UK Home Office’, *The Guardian*, 31 May 2018. <<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/may/31/vital-immigration-papers-lost-by-uk-home-office>> [accessed 26 April 2019].

⁶ Grierson ‘Vital immigration papers lost by UK Home Office’.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ Nancy Green, ‘Expatriation, Expatriates, and Expats: The American Transformation of a Concept’, *The American Historical Review*, 114.2 (2009), 307-328 (p. 308).

⁹ Green ‘Expatriation, Expatriates, and Expats: The American Transformation of a Concept’, 308.

“exile”, which emphasises the transformation of the term.¹⁰ This thesis is not so concerned with the latter, because the expat communities that will be discussed have not been exiled, rather those communities who wish to move freely. Furthermore, Green indicates that because the term is outdated and is being used in contemporary society where people frequently migrate, establishing an identity for such individuals may be a difficult task. Therefore, I believe it is important to inquire into a modern, commonly used definition of expatriates appropriate for the expats of today.

From an economic perspective and relating to up to date affairs in global migration, business and management scholars Carolina Machado and Paulo Davim say there are three elements that define an expatriate. Firstly, explain the scholars, expatriates are employed, meaning people who have retired and reside in a new country, or an unemployed student who studies overseas, do not exist within the definition of an expatriate.¹¹ According to Machado and Davim, a second quality that makes up an expatriate, is employment in a country other than their homeland determined by their passport and citizenship. This also means the term expatriate emphasises a change in their place of residence in addition to employment. The scholars then move onto another type of expatriate, one who moves to another country temporarily for business reasons which can be up to a decade long, this is called a business expatriate.¹² Machado and Davim have indicated, through taking an economic approach, that expatriates have similar qualities to migrants, but that they must work in a country other than their own to fit into this definition. In relation to this thesis, the first chapter will show how the EU citizens living in the UK take pride in contributing to the country through working and paying tax. Therefore, taking an economical approach to studying this group would be practical. However, I am not convinced that the fundamental trait of employment constitutes to the overall definition of an expatriate, and that further discussions on the term may better apply to the EU citizens living in the UK.

For example, Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels who specialises in European Studies, argues that the correct and legal definition of expatriates simply describe those who have given up their citizenship to reside in another country. However, Klekowski von Koppenfels alludes to Rainer Bauböck and his broader sociological definition describing expatriates as citizens who live

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ Carolina Machado and Paulo Davim, *Organizational Behaviour and Human Resource Management: A Guide to Specialised MBA Course* (New York: Springer, 2017), p. 109.

¹² Machado and Davim, *Organizational Behaviour and Human Resource Management: A Guide to Specialised MBA Course*, 110.

permanently (or for a long time) outside their country of citizenship.¹³ This description also applies to the word “diaspora”, which is a broader and a more ideological concept of expatriates.¹⁴ The term diaspora entails a shared loyalty between citizens of an external homeland, often with the longing to go back. However, Bauböck makes it clear that diaspora does not apply to all expatriates, and that it would be difficult to apply this term to different profiles of expatriates.¹⁵ Klekowski von Koppenfels adds to the concept of diaspora, and suggests that it can be applied to expatriates who live outside their country of citizenship regardless of their income or skill, length of residence, or where they originated from.¹⁶

These debates involving different academic perspectives discuss the history and assumptions on a modern meaning of expats, and a range of adaptable concepts such as the characteristics of migrating individuals, which in turn illustrates the ambiguity of the term expat. In the context of the EU citizens living in the UK, I deduce that these expatriates exist within the definition of Bauböck’s diaspora. The community of EU citizens living in the UK consist of a range of individuals that originate from different countries across Europe, and, have different occupations to one another with various incomes and skills. However, a main factor that brings them together, is the sharing, documentation, and publication of their stories across blogs and social media platforms in response to Brexit, creating an EU expat digital diasporic network. The particularities of this network will be discussed at length in the first chapter of this thesis.

Source material

This thesis will carry out a discourse analysis by examining the communicative and emotive language exchanged between expatriates through digital diaspora, which pertains to the social media activity, and testimonies that are posted on the EU citizens’ Brexit blogging site which will serve as a primary source of information for this piece of work. The first chapter of this thesis will focus on one group of EU expats in particular, the ones that belong to the ILP.

¹³ Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels, *Migrants or Expatriates?: Americans in Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 23.

¹⁴ Rainer Bauböck, ‘Stakeholder Citizenship and Transnational Political Participation: A Normative Evaluation of External Voting’, *Fordham Law Review*, 75.5 (2017), 2393-2447 (p. 2399).

¹⁵ Bauböck ‘Stakeholder Citizenship and Transnational Political Participation: A Normative Evaluation of External Voting’, 2399.

¹⁶ Klekowski von Koppenfels, *Migrants or Expatriates?: Americans in Europe*, 24.

I asked Elena Remigi, founder and co-editor of the In Limbo books, to elaborate on the nature of the Brexit blog. I learned that many testimonies are extracted from social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, and then uploaded onto the Brexit blog by the administrators, some are also submitted directly to the blog by members. Chapter One will explore the EU citizens' experiences living in the UK throughout the process of Brexit, as well as other issues that come on top of being an expat living in the UK even before Brexit. The EU citizens' testimonies consist of emotive contexts that differ from one another; those who recall positive feelings of inclusion whilst being a part of a community and how politics changes this mentality, and those who express negative experiences such as discrimination due to society's attitudes towards race and immigration.

This thesis will look at this discourse with the prospect that it will deliver different perspectives from EU citizens living in the UK regarding notions of belonging. Furthermore, by studying the political and societal context of these testimonies that exist on the Brexit blog and social media, this thesis hopes to comprehend the importance of preserving digital diaspora concerning expat communities.

Regarding the testimonies on the Brexit blog, there are to this day 28 testimonies¹⁷. However, the amount of other qualitative data available regarding EU citizen accounts is substantial. Since the testimonies are often created outside of the Brexit blog, for example on social media, and that many new accounts are constantly generated online, it is important that this research incorporates a sample of testimonies that are representative to the EU citizens' notions of belonging. In order to do this, this research will consider four testimonies from each of the websites most popular to the ILP's digital activity; Facebook, Twitter, and the Brexit blog. I deduce that a larger sample would be unrealistic based on the volume of content generated everyday by social media users. Furthermore, in order for this piece of work to adequately take into account the various perspectives amongst this diverse expat community, this research will refer to an assorted sample of testimonies. For example, some testimonies may come to suggest that EU expats living in the UK share notions of inclusion, whereas other may express the opposite. Moreover, some testimonies may indicate political issues that influence expat notions of belonging, whereas some may point to societal issues. By making use of comparative qualitative data, this thesis will consider these factors in order to recognise the grey areas that may exist within this subject and strives to come to a fair conclusion.

¹⁷ In Limbo Project, *In Limbo Testimonies* (2019), <<https://www.ourbrexitblog.org/in-limbo-testimonies/>> [accessed 24 September 2019].

Testimonies in general, however, can be problematic as primary source material. Devin Pendas, who specialises in European legal history, suggests that personal texts such as testimonies are often influenced by external situations such as the media.¹⁸ However, Pendas also notes that letter writing sources allows the researcher to examine the relationships that the author has with their families and the society they live in, which assists historians in understanding the authors sense of self within their community.¹⁹ Therefore, the testimonies generated from the EU citizens will help this research take an emic approach by studying the perspectives that come directly from expatriate communities.

The blogging website used by the EU citizens is a vital component for this thesis because it allows quick and easy access to the Brexit testimonies, however, using this site could come with risks. To elaborate, American historian Roy Rosenzweig, explains the issues that come with using websites as primary sources by using the example of the *Bert Is Evil* website. This was a website comprised of images with Bert from the show *Sesame Street* edited in, for example, a picture of Bert sitting next to Adolf Hitler, and was made to look like a member of the SS. The maker of the *Bert Is Evil* Website, Dino Ignacio, was threatened with legal action to shut down the offensive website. With the sudden deletion of this online source, Rosenzweig suggests that historians, regarding online research, ought to be aware about what the digital era is capable of.²⁰ Therefore, researchers concerned with the blogging system of the EU citizens must be prepared for the possibility that it may one day cease to exist. However, media specialist Melda Yildiz argues a more optimistic point for using websites that hold information such as blogs. For example, ethnic groups generate valuable primary source content through the web to preserve their cultural heritage.²¹ In this way, researchers are provided fast access to detailed accounts concerning personal experiences, and websites in particular offer a deep understanding of the histories concerning ethnic groups.²²

This thesis will use social media content for primary source information when analysing the digital diasporic networks of expatriates such as the EU citizens. Primary use of social media sites may generate similar issues described by Rosenzweig. However, I believe that Yildiz's work on websites can be applied to social media pages - being spaces where countless groups document their historical and cultural heritage. Therefore, this thesis will use social media as a primary source of information

¹⁸ Devin Pendas, 'Testimony', in *Reading Primary Sources: The Interpretation of Texts from Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century History*, ed. by Miriam Dobson, and Benjamin Ziemann (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 226-242 (p. 69).

¹⁹ Pendas, 'Testimony', 67.

²⁰ Roy Rosenzweig, 'Scarcity or Abundance? Preserving the Past in a Digital Era', *The American Historical Review*, 108.3 (2003), 735-762 (p. 736).

²¹ Melda Yildiz, *Handbook of Research on Media Literacy in the Digital Age* (Pennsylvania: IGI Global, 2015), p. 196.

²² Yildiz, *Handbook of Research on Media Literacy in the Digital Age*, 196.

with the ambition to aid in understanding the aspects of cultural heritage within expatriate communities through digital diaspora.

This thesis will also make use of secondary source material such as scholarly literature and online articles and newspapers similar to the Guardian article concerning the UK Home Office. In this thesis, the online newspapers and articles used to access information will be those written by journalists reporting on political events such as the UK Home Office activities, and those that offer direct quotes from expatriates responding to particular situations regarding their status in society or political events. Stephen Vella, a specialist in the history of the British Empire, suggests that information provided in newspapers are often handpicked and selected based on deciding what is worthy to record in the first place.²³ Nevertheless, Vella also notes that newspapers offer rich information concerning the social, political, and cultural aspects of the past.²⁴ Furthermore, newspapers are useful for conducting a comparative textual analysis, and can help historians comprehend how people perceive themselves in society.²⁵ Similarly to the testimonies, newspapers will therefore allow this research to continue exercising an emic approach into analysing the lives of the EU citizens living in the UK and other communities of expatriates.

This thesis will take advantage of primary and secondary sources as they offer an insider perspective of expatriate communities and fast access to their diasporic networks and content, however, at the same time, will be aware of the problems that come with taking in information that exists online.

Methodology

The chronology of this thesis will be directed by the cotemporary events concerning the recent politics of archiving expatriates in the 21st century, as well as venturing into modern digital archiving procedures. For an easier read, the term expatriate will for the majority of the time be shortened to “expat” throughout this thesis.

This piece of work engages with the emerging field of the study of digital diaspora. This will begin in Chapter One, where the first part of the main question will be explored by looking at expat

²³ Ibidem.

²⁴ Stephen Vella, ‘Newspapers’, in *Reading Primary Sources: The Interpretation of Texts from Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century History*, ed. by Miriam Dobson, and Benjamin Ziemann (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 192-208 (p. 192).

²⁵ Vella, ‘Newspapers’, 192.

communities who engage in digital diaspora to understand if notions of belonging are influenced by different mechanisms of inclusion such as societal, cultural and political influences.

The scholars who examine expat digital diaspora often do so by conducting a discursive analysis. Therefore, the first chapter of this thesis will analyse the online activity of the EU citizens living in the UK as an original case study to understand notions of belonging, which aims to add to the existing scholarly topics on expats' engagement in digital diaspora. The methodology of this discourse analysis is inspired by researcher in communication studies Marianna Zummo, who also carries out a discursive analysis on expat bloggers and qualitative data. Zummo focuses on the idea of the self within online expat communication in relation to ideas of belonging in society. Zummo does so by looking at how expats distinguish themselves from others they encounter in their host countries. Therefore, Zummo's technique is a useful template for examining digital diaspora and understanding the EU citizens' notions of belonging in the UK.

The second chapter of this thesis aims to partially explore the second part of the main question; why and who should archive expat material regarding digital diaspora. This chapter will begin by exploring the value of expat material and the institutions that typically take on the responsibility of archiving expats. This activity aims to provide a better understanding of why expat material in general should be archived, and will touch upon the larger problem of who, based on a range of archival institutions, should take on the responsibility to preserve material generated by expats through digital diaspora. In order to understand the EU expat community and the value of their digital documentation, this chapter will also explore the motives behind community archiving in the context of immigration, and the projects that are involved in archiving communities in society.

Having looked at why and who should archive expat digital diaspora, the first section of the final chapter will focus on answering the last part of the main question, concerning the technicalities of how digital diaspora can be archived, and the issues that come with these procedures. The final section of this chapter will create a hypothetical situation by applying the technical approaches towards preserving digital activity to the case study of archiving the EU citizens' digital diaspora. After having explored this hypothetical situation, this thesis aims to conclude and advise in general, the best approach to archiving expat digital diaspora. Such as: why the lives of these EU citizens should be archived, who should manage their archive, and how their digital content should be archived.

Chapter One. Expatriates, digital diaspora, and belonging

This chapter aims to study the first part of the main question; to what extent do expatriate communities construct notions of belonging through digital diaspora, and how they may or not be influenced by political and or societal influences. The introduction to this chapter will briefly provide some context on digital diaspora before applying the topic of expatriate communities that engage in digital diaspora. Having previously studied expat digital diaspora, this chapter aims to understand the circumstances of the EU citizens as a community, their digital diaspora, and the factors that may influence their notions of belonging. The EU citizen community, the ILP in particular, will be disclosed in the first and only section of this chapter as contribution of an original case study to the topic of expat digital diaspora.

To begin with what digital diaspora is, aside from what was mentioned by Bauböck in the introduction to this thesis - professor in performance and new media, Gabriella Giannachi, explains community digital diaspora. Giannachi suggests that the modern concept of a diaspora alludes to ethnic minority groups of migrant origins that live in other countries, yet, they maintain sentimental and material ties with their place of origin.²⁶ This term applies to groups of people ranging from expatriates, expellees, political refugees, alien residents, immigrants, and ethnic and racial minorities.²⁷ In recent years, these groups have been engaging in digital diaspora, otherwise known as e-diaspora, or virtual diaspora, which Giannachi notes are terms that describe an “electronic migrant community who interact through social media”²⁸. Social media platforms that facilitate these groups are those alike to Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, which assist these groups in building a space to discuss their concerns in connection to their memory, homeland, consciousness and identity.²⁹

Much like Giannachi, professor of international affairs Jenifer Brinkerhoff discusses modern diasporas as “ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin – their homelands”³⁰. Brinkerhoff says it is commonly accepted by scholars that communities who engage in diaspora

²⁶ Gabriella Giannachi, *Archive Everything: Mapping the Everyday* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2016), p. 101.

²⁷ Giannachi, *Archive Everything: Mapping the Everyday*, 101.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, 102.

²⁹ *Ibidem*.

³⁰ Jenifer Brinkerhoff, *Digital Diasporas: Identity and Transnational Engagement* (Washington DC: Washington University, 2012), p. 29.

share a self-awareness or diasporic consciousness.³¹ Furthermore, she notes that identity is central to diaspora.³² For example, diasporic organisations allow members to negotiate their identity through communication and collective action. Brinkerhoff says that diasporic organisations can act as a “shelter, sometimes a sanctuary, where culture, religion, ethnicity, and nation are interpreted, redefined, and internalised”³³.

Brinkerhoff suggests that storytelling and sharing, for example, lead to the negotiation and construction of identity: “stories create recognition of common experiences that shape identity and link people’s futures”³⁴. Furthermore, organisations of diaspora are often self-governing and offer a wide range of benefits to members such as material, solidary, cultural identity, and purpose benefits.³⁵ However, Brinkerhoff mentions that diasporas do not construct a permanent identity, and that due to the constant discourse amongst expats, identity is subject to change – becoming then a “hybrid identity”³⁶. Nevertheless, diasporic communities will constantly express their identities through storytelling, promoting a shared consensus, and sense making. They also “test the boundaries” of shared identities to sustain a collective bond.³⁷ Brinkerhoff suggests that the internet is important for diasporic communities, as they use the web as a mobilisation tool for collecting hybrid identities, offer benefits, and present and discuss issues among each other.³⁸

Giannachi and Brinkerhoff indicate that expatriate communities engage with digital diaspora, and that it is common for these communities to hold sentimental ties to their homeland. Furthermore, these scholars suggest that identities are formed in the web of this digital activity, and mentioned by Brinkerhoff, that social media sites can offer these communities a safe space to communicate with one another and establish a consensus on identity. To further understand these ideas on community digital diaspora in the context of expatriates, this chapter will now lay out a sample of case studies of expatriates who engage in digital diaspora.

Marianna Zummo studies blogs written by expats in both European and Asian countries and says that

³¹ Brinkerhoff, *Digital Diasporas: Identity and Transnational Engagement*, 29.

³² *Ibidem*, 31.

³³ *Ibidem*, 39.

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, 52.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, 40.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, 52.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, 53.

online blogging is one of the most modern and global social practices.³⁹ Zummo's definition of expats are a group of people who usually belong to the middle class and heavily engage with modern tourist activities. Zummo focuses on the digital discourse created by expats, particularly the words "us" and "they". Her findings suggest that the blogs promote different images of expatriate identity and tourism.⁴⁰ For example, the blogs of expats who had visited Europe describe the locals as an accommodating community and refers to them as "them". When the bloggers use the term "us", they are describing themselves as people who have little knowledge of foreign languages, yet they travel the world with an open mind and a positive attitude.⁴¹ However, these expat bloggers do differentiate themselves to tourists by using the term "they". When the bloggers talk of other tourists as "they", they profile tourists as individuals who feel under pressure, consumerists, and do not savour the experience.⁴²

In contrast to the European blogs, blogs written in Asian countries suggest that the bloggers portray a negative attitude towards their host countries. For example, when the bloggers use the term "they", the expats are referring to the locals in a negative way with a warning to other travellers. The locals are described as unwelcoming and resentful who have little interest in communicating with foreigners, often resulting in a language barrier.⁴³ In these blogs, tourists are not mentioned, and the bloggers reveal little about the self in the term "us" in comparison to the European blogs⁴⁴.

Based on the positive experiences of bloggers in European countries due to its inviting culture, it seems that expats in European countries share notions of belonging regarding inclusion. However, due to the negative experiences in Asian countries, the bloggers depict a sense of rejection in their blogs. Based on this, I argue that Zummo's findings suggest that this contrast is shaped by the location and culture in which the expats situate themselves. This shows that notions of belonging are not formed solely because the expat is a foreigner, but by external influences such as society and culture, and their response to the presence of expats in their country.

Professors in human resources Ruth McPhail and Ron Fisher discuss Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) expatriate's social media activity in relation to the group's place in society.

³⁹ Marianna Zummo, 'On the discursive self-construction of expats, behaviour and values', *Scripta Manent*, 12.1 (2018), 6-20 (p. 7).

⁴⁰ Zummo 'On the discursive self-construction of expats, behaviour and values', 17.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, 12.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, 14.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

Like Zummo, their conclusions suggest external influences towards notions of belonging between LGBT expats. McPhail and Fisher also contribute to the never-ending discussion on defining expats by laying out the traditional view of an expat in contrast to LGBT expats, which stereotypically refers to the heterosexual male with a “trailing” female spouse and maybe children.⁴⁵

McPhail and Fisher indicate that LGBT expats may experience more negativity in society than the traditional expat, for example, LGBT expats are a group that may avoid building towards a high position in their career. McPhail and Fisher say that when individuals belonging to this group do aim for higher positions, being an expat may subject them to prejudice with the threat of being stereotyped.⁴⁶ The scholars suggest that social media is an important utility for expatriates of the LGBT community because it allows them to create strong connections with others in the same position as them which increases a sense of belonging and security.⁴⁷

Based on the evidence that these expats experience negativity in society due to their sexuality and gender identity, I deduce that, similarly to Zummo’s findings, being an expat alone is not the dominating factor that drives their notions of belonging shared through digital diaspora. Other factors also influence expats and their position within society such as gender politics and discrimination.

In contrast to Zummo, and McPhail and Fisher’s studies, associate professor Qi Tang and researcher of communication studies Chin-Chung Chao, inspect expat blogs in search of how American expats in contemporary China represent their host country through common Western perceptions of the East. Regarding an understanding of blogs and social relevance, Tang and Chao describe the China blogs as “a digital site of cultural representation”⁴⁸. Having looked at the possibilities of external influences such as societal prejudice and the attitudes of different cultures, it is interesting to see how neither of these factors or notions of belonging feature in some expat blogs.

According to Tang and Chao, the motivation driving these individuals to blog is the pursuit to share their evaluation of Chinese culture with other expats and the rest of the world.⁴⁹ The blogs show that in order for the expats to achieve their goal, they had to include themselves in Chinese culture as if

⁴⁵ Ruth McPhail and Ron Fisher, ‘Lesbian and gay expatriates use of social media to aid acculturation’, *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 49 (2015), 294-307 (p. 294).

⁴⁶ Mcphail and Fisher ‘Lesbian and gay expatriates use of social media to aid acculturation’, 296.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, 301.

⁴⁸ Qi Tang and Chin-Chung Chao, ‘Foreigners’ archive: contemporary China in the blogs of American expatriates’, *Chinese Journal of Communication*, 3.4 (2010), 384-401 (p. 387).

⁴⁹ Tang and Chao ‘Foreigners’ archive: contemporary China in the blogs of American expatriates’, 392.

they were a native.⁵⁰ This involved the expats doing what they witnessed Chinese citizens doing such as getting employed, socialising with neighbours, eating the local food every day, and encountering the loneliness that may come with being the only American citizen in a small Chinese town.⁵¹

Considering the relevance of Tang and Chao's study since it differs from that of Zummo and McPhail and Fisher's, it is important to establish that not all expat communities engage in digital diaspora for the same reasons. For example, Zummo's expats blogged about identity, and a distinction between the expat and the native, and McPhail and Fisher indicated that the LGBT community use social media as a safe space to share notions of belonging. However, it becomes apparent that Tang and Chao's expat bloggers engage in this digital activity for the purpose of cultural representation.

The topic on expat communities and digital diaspora illustrate the different factors that may shape expat notions of belonging, such as location and culture, society's attitudes towards marginalised groups, and the subtopic of representation. This chapter will now present a section on the case study of EU citizens living in the UK and their digital activity, to add to the emerging topic of expat digital diaspora and determine what may influence their notions of belonging in UK societies in light of Brexit.

1.1. Case study: The EU citizens living in the UK

Following Brexit, a UK non-profit organisation *the3million*, was formed by a group of EU citizens in order to protect the rights and lives of the EU citizens living in the UK following the EU referendum, as well as providing a voice for the citizens in the British media. The group was initiated by a number of EU citizens, and the committee comprises of chairman Nicolas Hatton, and director Katia Widlack, both of whom are activists and French citizens. Ilse Mogensen and Dimitri Scallato direct the Advocacy council, and the organisation also collaborates with politicians and governments across the UK to promote their cause.⁵²

The group makes use of social media platforms, mainly Facebook and Twitter, which offers a

⁵⁰ Ibidem.

⁵¹ Ibidem.

⁵² the3million, the3million (2019), <<https://www.the3million.org.uk/>> [accessed 24 June 2019].

network for EU citizens living in the UK to seek support during the process of Brexit. *the3million* generate vast amounts of content through social media platforms and their online blogging, which consists of countless testimonies describing the problems that members encounter due to Brexit. These issues include: their feelings of rejection and betrayal; anxieties concerning their place within society; the threat that they may be separated from families and friends; losing their career and education; and many other uncertainties that have arisen since the referendum result. The group have posted an illustration on their online forum to depict these issues, as well as considering those UK citizens living in European countries that may also experience difficulties in light of Brexit (see fig. 1). Although the group raise awareness for the UK expatriates abroad, the EU citizens will be the main focus of this thesis as a case study. The ILP is a subgroup created by members of *the3million* to further raise awareness on the issues experienced by EU citizens, and the ILP will be the main group discussed in the case study.⁵³



Figure 1. An illustration depicting Brexit as a sinking boat, and a raft holding an “SOS” flag, emphasising the disadvantageous position of EU and UK citizens.⁵⁴

To quickly recap on what Brexit is in more detail – Brexit is the name given to the UK’s withdrawal from the EU, and the name comes from the combination of “Britain”, and “Exit”. The UK held a referendum on the 23rd of June 2016 which gave voters in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland the option to remain in or leave the EU, of which 51.89% of voters chose to leave the EU.⁵⁵

⁵³ In Limbo Project, *Dear Leavers* (2019), < <https://www.ourbrexitblog.org/> > [accessed 5 May 2019].

⁵⁴ *the3million*, ‘About Us’ [online] <https://static.wixstatic.com/media/0d3854_12977e6456244bd2b960485c3426964d~mv2.jpg/v1/fill/w_600,h_411,a_l_c_q_80,usm_0.66_1.00_0.01/the3million---Axel-Scheffler---Ringfenci.webp> [accessed 14 May 2019].

⁵⁵ Government of the Netherlands, What is Brexit? (2019) <<https://www.government.nl/topics/brexit/question-and-answer/what-is-brexit>> [accessed 24 June 2019].

The introduction to this thesis pointed out the influences towards the national decision of Brexit held political consequences for the EU citizens living in the UK, and was responsible for the sudden incline of digital activity. These influences involved concerns over immigration, which is important to consider when inquiring into shared notions of belonging amongst EU citizen communities in the UK. To clarify the relevance of immigration to the referendum result, Goodwin and Milazzo look at evidence towards why people in the UK voted to leave the EU.

Goodwin and Milazzo point out that public hostility towards immigration was largely associated with those who supported MEP (Member of European Parliament) Nigel Farage – former UK Independence Party leader, and the populist right.⁵⁶ These negative attitudes had been stirring a while before the referendum result, and that an EU referendum was at its highest demand during the 10 year period that led up to the vote, and during this time there was an influx of EU nationals in the UK. Based on this evidence, the scholars conclude that ethnic change may have shaped the public vote.⁵⁷

A potential political consequence of Brexit which could have initially induced fear for the estimated 3,384,000 EU citizens living in the UK at the time of the referendum⁵⁸, was an end to free movement between the UK and other European countries. Political scientists Benjamin Martill and Uta Staiger, discuss the individual rights and status consequences of terminating free movement as a result of the UK leaving the European Union, and how these implications affect those EU citizens living in the UK.⁵⁹ The regime of free movement has guaranteed the protection of citizens' mobility within the 27 EU member states for the last 60 years. Since leaving the EU presents a likely end to free movement, Martill and Staiger suggest that the original UK proposals would cause a significant level of degradation of rights for EU citizens living in the UK.⁶⁰ Even citizens who, on documentation provided by the UK Home Office, harbour the status of “permanent residence”, they are still required to apply for a new “settled status” for when the UK withdraws from the EU. If citizens fail to do so, regardless of how long they have resided in the UK, they may be at risk of breaking the UK

⁵⁶ Matthew Goodwin and Caitlin Milazzo, ‘Taking back control? Investigating the role of immigration in the 2016 vote for Brexit’, *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 19.3 (2017), 450-464 (p. 451).

⁵⁷ Goodwin and Milazzo ‘Taking back control? Investigating the role of immigration in the 2016 vote for Brexit’, 542.

⁵⁸ Office for National Statistics, Population of the UK by country of birth and nationality (2019), <<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/datasets/populationoftheunitedkingdombycountryofbirthandnationality?fbclid=IwAR0MnKyTTUubIHYA-FDs65FSFWn-TrK4eLE3Em02Vhv2KP-y-hJupQ5lIEU>> [accessed 13/08/2019].

⁵⁹ Benjamin Martill and Uta Staiger, *Brexit and Beyond: Rethinking the Futures of Europe* (London: UCL Press, 2018), p. 157.

⁶⁰ Martill and Staiger, *Brexit and Beyond: Rethinking the Futures of Europe*, 157.

immigration law.⁶¹

Based on the negative attitudes of UK citizens towards EU immigration and the threat of free movement, it is interesting to explore how these factors may create notions of belonging regarding inclusion or exclusion within the EU citizen' digital diaspora. Therefore, I will begin by exploring the social media development of *the3million*, and how they branched out to other online platforms to connect and spread awareness of their cause, shortly before analysing testimonies written by EU citizens regarding Brexit.

Continuing on with *the3million*, this group operates a Facebook forum called "Forum for EU Citizens (the3million)"⁶². As well as EU citizens, the group also welcomes British citizens who may be affected by the current state of affairs regarding Brexit and its impact on their European family and friends. This forum was created on the 24th July 2016, around one month after the referendum results. The forum states that it has two main objectives: Firstly, "to provide a demographic platform to support EU citizens with advice and guidance related to residing in the UK" and, "to share news and political developments about our rights as EU citizens living in the UK". There are at least 37,780 members of this forum and 17 administrators. This group, of which I am a member, is closed, and individuals who wish to become a member must be recognised and accepted by a moderator.⁶³

The activities within this forum involve discussions on political events regarding Brexit, and posts seeking for advice from others usually concerning questions about the settled status scheme. There is also an events tab encouraging members to meet up and attend demonstrations and protests across the UK to voice their concerns on the progress of Brexit. Other tabs attached to the forum include file exchanges which allow members to upload attachments such as photos, videos, and recommendations to links which may serve useful for those who struggle to apply for settled status, or advice on writing to a local Member of Parliament (MP). The forum also exists outside Facebook on a website⁶⁴, which possesses the same nature as the Facebook version.

the3million operate another Facebook group which was created two years after the referendum

⁶¹ Ibidem.

⁶² the3million, (the3million, 25 July 2016), 'Forum for EU Citizens (the3million)' (Facebook group page) <<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Forum4EUcitizens/about/>> [accessed 3 May 2019].

⁶³ Ibidem.

⁶⁴ the3million, *The Forum for EU Citizens* (2019), <<https://www.the3million.org.uk/forum>> [accessed 3 May 2019].

results called “the3million – ILR Holders Group”⁶⁵. This page is strictly apolitical, the group makes it clear that any opinion on British politics are not welcome to be discussed on this page. This group is private, run by the same admins, and the activities are similar to those of the forum.

Members of *the3million* branched out and created a third Facebook group called “In Limbo – Our Brexit Testimonies GROUP”⁶⁶. This is the Facebook group of the ILP led by an Italian citizen Elena Remigi, also a member of *the3million*, which was created one year after the vote. This page was made as an additional space for EU citizens living in the UK to share their experiences during the uncertainty of the Brexit process. Testimonies that were posted to this group were extracted and incorporated in the books: *In Limbo*⁶⁷ and *In Limbo Too*⁶⁸. The first book entails the testimonies of the EU citizens living in the UK, and the second holds those written by UK citizens living abroad in other European countries. After the creation of this Facebook group, an online Brexit blog⁶⁹ was created by the ILP to produce the *In Limbo* books and log the Brexit testimonies written by the citizens. The project’s website also displays the testimonies that were not published in the *In Limbo* books and offers the opportunity to submit a testimony to the blog.

Focusing now particularly on *the3million* subgroup - the ILP exists on other social media platforms, for instance, they have their own Twitter account which was established one year after the vote⁷⁰. This account usually microblogs their views on political news regarding Brexit, and Tweets feature hashtags so those who wish to connect with other followers will be directed to this specific account. Furthermore, the ILP also have a YouTube platform called “In Limbo: Our Brexit Testimonies” and published their first video “In Limbo: Brexit testimonies from EU citizens in the UK”⁷¹ one year after the vote. This video plays emotional music with a slide show of photographs showing EU citizens and hashtags to the ILP’s social media platforms. However, this platform doesn’t seem to show much activity, its last upload was a year ago and it has 3 videos and 37 subscribers. The YouTube channel is not as popular as their Facebook and Twitter accounts, possibly because it is

⁶⁵ the3million, (the3million, 26 May 2018), ‘the3million – ILR Holders Group’ (Facebook group page) <<https://www.facebook.com/groups/the3million.IRL.holders/>> [accessed 3 May 2019].

⁶⁶ In Limbo Project, (In Limbo Project, 10 March 2017), ‘In Limbo – Our Brexit Testimonies GROUP’ (Facebook group page) <<https://www.facebook.com/groups/OurBrexitTestimonies/>> [accessed 3 May 2019].

⁶⁷ Elena Remigi, *In Limbo: Brexit testimonies from EU citizens in the Uk* (California: CreateSpace, 2017).

⁶⁸ Elena Remigi, *In Limbo Too: Brexit testimonies from UK citizens in the EU* (California: CreateSpace, 2018).

⁶⁹ In Limbo Project, *IN LIMBO* (2019), < <https://www.ourbrexitblog.org/> > [accessed 3 May 2019].

⁷⁰ In Limbo Project, (@InLimboBrexit, July 2017), ‘In Limbo’ (Twitter account) <<https://twitter.com/inlimbobrexit?lang=en>> [accessed 2 May 2019].

⁷¹ “*In Limbo: Brexit testimonies from EU citizens in the UK*”. By In Limbo: Our Brexit Testimonies (In Limbo Project, 2017), online film recording, YouTube, 21 May 2017, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCaPvXWY15A>> [accessed 2 May 2019].

easier for people to discuss through forums and discussion boards like Facebook and Twitter. The ILP's Instagram account entails 217 posts (images) and has 225 followers⁷². Like their YouTube channel, their Instagram account is not as popular as their Facebook or Twitter accounts either. However, it is still active with pictures that capture members at demonstrations, protests, conferences, the front covers of the *In Limbo* books, and screenshots of testimonies.

To inquire into notions of belonging established by the EU citizens through digital diaspora, this section will now examine a sample of testimonies from the group's most popular blog and social media sites; the Brexit blog, Twitter, and Facebook. These selected testimonies should provide an indication of the issues that the EU citizens encounter as an expat in UK society and in light of Brexit. I will begin with Corrine's story whose testimony was written on the 8th of March 2019. Corrine explains her situation before and after the vote:

Well let's talk about Brexit: this awful monster. When I think about it about a week before the vote of doom I was still singing very proudly 'God Save the Queen' with the military wives choirs. I was probably one of the proudest non-British Brits you could possibly imagine. Very sadly things obviously changed quite a lot since the vote. I have lost many friends along the way because I think they simply cannot understand how this all feels like.

They cannot relate to it at all. They just do not understand what it means to feel rejected. Basically, to lose all sense of belonging and it is really hard because the place you called home no longer is. You don't actually know any more where home is.⁷³

Corrine's testimony expresses her sense of rejection within society, as well as feeling desperate to make people understand her situation and to be acknowledged. Furthermore, from what she explains, she no longer feels like the person she was, which was a member of a community that took part in cultural activities. As a result of Brexit, she now describes herself as an excluded member of that

⁷² In Limbo Project, (@inlimbobrexit, July 2019), 'In Limbo – Brexit Testimonies' (Instagram account) <<https://www.instagram.com/inlimbobrexit/?hl=en>> [accessed 2 May 2019].

⁷³ In Limbo Project, *I was probably one of the proudest non-British Brits* (2019), <<https://www.ourbrexitblog.org/2019/03/08/i-was-probably-one-of-the-proudest-non-british-brits/>> [accessed 3 May 2019].

same society she once felt a part of. The next story I will share is Monika's which was written on the 29th June 2017:

Quite frankly, I feel betrayed. Over 25 years of paying taxes and NI contributions in this country, and now I might not even be entitled to a pension. I fear for the future of my daughter, who came to the UK at the age of 9 and graduated here, who has only an estranged father in Poland. I also worry about my three lovely grandchildren, born here and with UK passports, in case my daughter and I are thrown out of the country. The uncertainty is killing me. I've been sick with depression for many years, feeling the undercurrent of racism throughout my life here in the UK, but at least the government and the law were on my side. Now the security is gone.⁷⁴

Monika's story is similar to that of Corrine's. Monika's testimony indicates a sense of individual rejection, being misunderstood, having an unrecognised identity, and an outcast of the community she once felt a part of. The next testimony comes from an anonymous black French national, created on the 29th June 2017:

Racist abuse against me has occurred on/off throughout those years. Recently though, running up to the Referendum some have become 'bolder'. For instance, a group of youngsters have thrown stones towards me (thankfully there was a river between us), but the latest abuse came from all the local mums I knew as friends who suddenly stopped talking to me!! One even told me: 'if one day you decide to turn on the UK and bomb us, please bomb me with my children so I don't leave them behind!' To this day, it hurts.⁷⁵

This testimony indicates that the French national experiences negative encounters as a black expat

⁷⁴ In Limbo Project, *Monika's Story* (2017), <<https://www.ourbrexitblog.org/2017/06/29/monikas-story/>> [accessed 3 May 2019].

⁷⁵ In Limbo Project, *A French EU Citizen's Story (1)* (2017), <<https://www.ourbrexitblog.org/2017/06/29/french-story-1/>> [accessed 3 May 2019].

long before the EU Referendum, it was just the event of Brexit that added to the already existing burdens experienced by this individual. Therefore, issues within society such as discrimination may coincide with drastic political changes that in turn shape notions of belonging for expats in the UK.

These citizens who consciously or unconsciously felt to belong within UK society albeit in different ways, now come to share feelings of exclusion. There is evidence to suggest that the experiences of EU expats living in the UK are shaped by political influences such as Brexit, whether they were negative or positive ones. For example, Monika and Corrine's stories suggested they lived pleasant lives as expats who gained the support of the government and friends. Brexit however, had a huge impact on how expat EU citizens felt in the UK. Nevertheless, in the case of the EU citizens, it is not only the influence of politics that contributes towards notions of belonging. These testimonies highlight more mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion besides Brexit. Considering these observations, I conclude that there are many layers of belonging within expat communities that involve political, cultural, and societal influences on notions of belonging amongst expat communities.

A sense of societal rejection, betrayal from friends and the government due to Brexit is an occurring theme within these three testimonies. However, some accounts suggested the opposite, that Brexit is in fact irrelevant to the lives of some EU expats living in the UK. Some EU citizens express in their testimonies, even though very few, either that they do not experience the same level of exclusion or encounter any exclusion at all to that matter. For example, O. P.'s Story seems rather unaffected by the Brexit referendum in comparison to other stories:

To date the result of the Brexit vote has not affected me. Even in the lead-up, in the midst of the Remain and Leave campaigns, I did not experience any negative situations. This may be due to the fact I am based in London, a city traditionally open to and founded by foreigners: the Romans.”

My position will be not to worry until I know the fate of EU citizens in the country. I will take decisions from that point on.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ In Limbo Project, *O. P.'s Story* (2017), < <https://www.ourbrexitblog.org/2017/06/29/op-s-story/>> [accessed 27 May 2019].

O. P's story represents those who do not actually experience feelings of rejection as an EU expat living in the UK in the process of Brexit. However, he or she did express an element of concern regarding the outcome of Brexit for other EU citizens in the UK. Moving on to exploring further digital activity of the EU citizen group, this chapter will now advance onto the testimonies generated through social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

Figure 2, a Twitter post, indicates that this EU citizen is aware of a sudden disruption regarding their place within UK society, for example, when the citizen suggests that he or she "used to" be an extrovert, and "I changed." Furthermore, this citizen expresses direct notions of belonging throughout their story, for instance when the citizen explains that there are groups of people in the UK who "no longer want me in their country." Figure 3 also pertains to notions of belonging regarding exclusion when the citizen states "I no longer belong." This citizen also shows that he feels political anxiety regarding settled status as they explain "even with settled status I can lose that right again." This indicates that some EU citizens living in the UK have little trust in the government regarding their rights to stay in the UK during the Brexit process or after. Furthermore, I perceive this story to highlight the problems that come with labelling and defining expats, and the attitudes towards immigration in the UK; "I am a queue jumper and a citizen of nowhere." This may reflect upon how some EU citizens see themselves in society and feel as though their identity is under attack during the process of Brexit.

Figure 4, much like the testimony submitted by the French national on the Brexit blog⁷⁷, emphasises the problems often associated with expat status such as racial discrimination. The EU citizens' discourse on race in the context of Brexit suggests that not only have negative attitudes towards immigration become apparent, but viewpoints on race also come alongside the topic of immigration. Whether this is a new phenomenon amongst some members of UK society, or that these ideals have always existed under the surface, is unknown. Nevertheless, these attitudes intensify during this specific political change in the UK. Figure 5 indicates less concern over EU expat identity than others. This story comments on British culture having lost its sense of originality, as well as Prime Minister Boris Johnson's recent plans to prorogue parliament which could result in the UK withdrawing from the EU without a deal.⁷⁸ This post reflects upon the

⁷⁷ In Limbo Project, *A French EU Citizen's Story (I)* (2017), <<https://www.ourbrexitblog.org/2017/06/29/french-story-1/>> [accessed 3 May 2019].

⁷⁸ Daniel Kraemer, 'Can a no-deal Brexit be stopped?' 3 September 2019. <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48519746>> [accessed 24 September 2019].

reactions of anxiety towards a great political change, and how it has distorted the Britain that this particular citizen once knew. Even though this citizen does not comment on the settled status scheme, this thesis has mentioned in the introduction that a no-deal Brexit could affect the EU citizen’s right to stay, therefore this post emphasises how drastic this change may be for some EU citizens.



Figure 2. In Limbo Tweet.⁷⁹

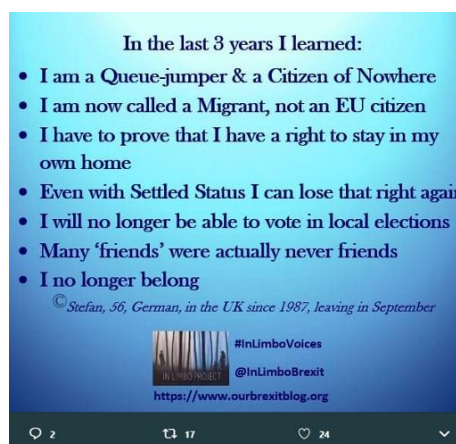


Figure 3. In Limbo Tweet.⁸⁰



Figure 4. In Limbo Tweet.⁸¹



Figure 5. In Limbo Tweet.⁸²

Members of the In Limbo Project also share stories by posting and commenting on Facebook. Figure 6, in contrast to other stories that this chapter has looked at, is an EU citizen’s testimony which recalls a positive experience during their daily life in UK society. Nevertheless, the shocked reaction just below the post suggests that this kind of experience is uncommon. Next to this post is figure 7, which is a transition from its Facebook form to a Tweet. This indicates that

⁷⁹ In Limbo (@InLimboBrexite), ‘I changed, I used to be light-hearted and extrovert...’ (tweet), <<https://twitter.com/hashtag/InLimboVoices?src=hash>> [accessed 23 September 2019].

⁸⁰ In Limbo (@InLimboBrexite), ‘I am a Queue-jumper & a Citizen of Nowhere...’ (tweet), <<https://twitter.com/hashtag/InLimboVoices?src=hash>> [accessed 23 September 2019].

⁸¹ In Limbo (@InLimboBrexite), ‘The silence from my friends is harder to bear than the racist abuse from strangers’ (tweet), <<https://twitter.com/hashtag/InLimboVoices?src=hash>> [accessed 23 September 2019].

⁸² In Limbo (@InLimboBrexite), ‘Waking up in a big state of shock...’ (tweet), <<https://twitter.com/hashtag/InLimboVoices?src=hash>> [accessed 23 September 2019].

the administrators from the ILP deem this experience to be important to share as they expand upon their social media activity. Figure 8 is an emotional statement, driven by a political consequence of Brexit, from an EU citizen's attempt to apply for settled status. This citizen expresses anger towards the UK government who were unable to find a record of her residency in the UK despite having lived there for five years. Based on this, I reason that this story puts into perspective the political consequences of the EU referendum decision and shines a negative light on the UK Government's recording procedures concerning who comes in and out of the country.

Figure 9 is a lengthy statement from an EU citizen who feels personally attacked by British society. She explains how British people perceive her country (not specifying which one) as "lazy", and that she should return. This highlights the negative attitudes towards immigrants in the UK, and that xenophobia has become an issue in the context of Brexit. This citizen says that she wanted to be a part of UK society by contributing her skills. She continues to explain that she feels unwelcome and pleads with the people of the UK to acknowledge her good intentions as an expat. Figure 10 is a prime example of other issues that come along side being an expat in the UK aside xenophobia, such as racism and sexism, making this particular expat feel "alone." This citizen claims that he is one of many that feel the same way about racist and sexist microaggressions in a Brexit context.

To draw an inference from these fragments of EU citizen digital diaspora, I interpret these attitudes to display many mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion for EU citizens living in the UK during the Brexit process. Many posts are similar and suggests that EU citizens feel excluded for the same reasons, such as native attitudes towards immigration and xenophobia. However, this becomes less clear cut when stories concerning other societal issues such as racism and sexism begin to appear. Furthermore, these posts also suggest the opposite to notions of exclusion when the documentation of positive experiences crop up across the EU citizens' digital network. I deduce that this contrast may be for a number of reasons. Firstly, the zealous negativity and emotional posting may prompt members to try and reflect positively on the situation. Nevertheless, it may simply be that these particular citizens don't feel elements of exclusion within their EU citizen community.



Figure 6. In Limbo Facebook post.⁸³



Figure 7. In Limbo Facebook post.⁸⁴

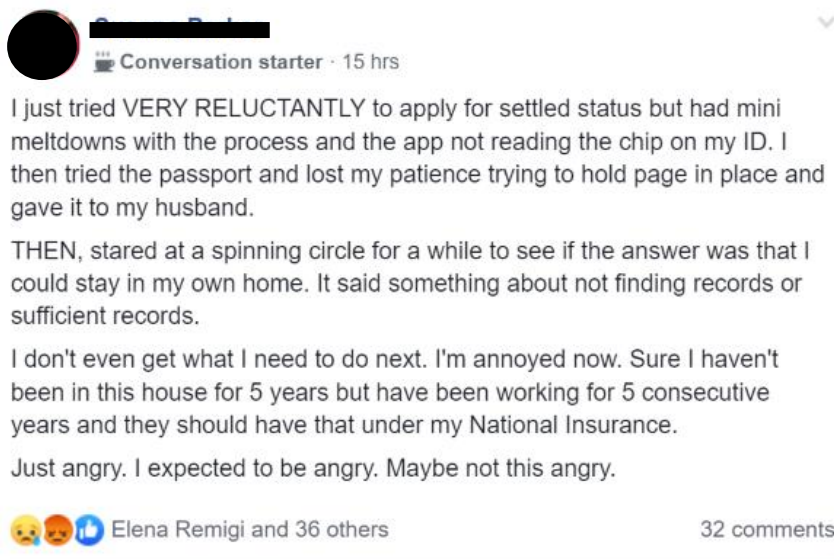


Figure 8. In Limbo Facebook post.⁸⁵

⁸³ In Limbo – Our Brexit Testimonies GROUP, ‘Today I was in Asda talking to my child in Spanish, the cashier heard me...’ (Facebook member post) <

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/OurBrexitTestimonies/>> [accessed 23 September 2019].

⁸⁴ In Limbo (@InLimboBrexit), ‘Today I was in Asda talking to my child in Spanish, the cashier heard me...’ (tweet), <<https://twitter.com/hashtag/InLimboVoices?src=hash>> [accessed 23 September 2019].

⁸⁵ In Limbo – Our Brexit Testimonies GROUP, ‘I just tried VERY RELUCTANTLY to apply for settled status but had mini meltdowns...’ (Facebook member post) <

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/OurBrexitTestimonies/>> [accessed 23 September 2019].

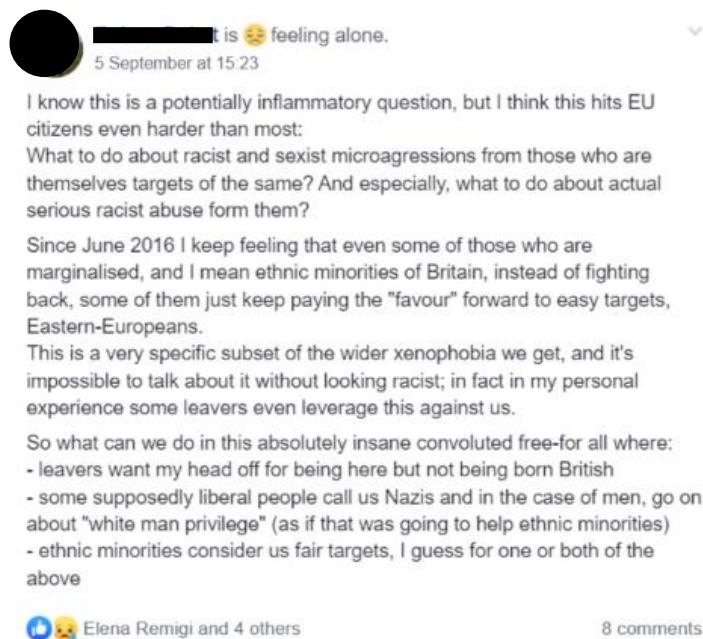


Figure 9. In Limbo Facebook post.⁸⁶



Figure 10. In Limbo Facebook post.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ In Limbo – Our Brexit Testimonies GROUP, ‘I know this is a potentially inflammatory question, but I think this hits the EU citizens even harder...’ (Facebook member post) < <https://www.facebook.com/groups/OurBrexitTestimonies/>> [accessed 23 September 2019].

⁸⁷ In Limbo – Our Brexit Testimonies GROUP, ‘Feeling a bit fed up earlier I wrote this on my wall. Feel free to delete if not appropriate...’ (Facebook member post) < <https://www.facebook.com/groups/OurBrexitTestimonies/>> [accessed 23 September 2019].

Conclusion

Based on the typical activities of digital diaspora such as posting, sharing, communicating, and file exchanging on numerous social media accounts, it is obvious that the EU citizens living in the UK heavily engage in digital diaspora. However, the EU citizens do not entirely comply with Giannachi and Brinkerhoff's definition of diaspora since this group does not tend to express their sentimental ties to their country of origin, which according to Brinkerhoff, is a modern trait of diaspora.⁸⁸ In fact, the testimonies show EU citizens' lamenting about how much they had an attachment with the UK prior to Brexit, how they regard the UK as their home, and how the thought of permanently moving back to their country of origin distresses them. Even though the EU citizens living in the UK lack this trait of diaspora, it is seen that they build bonds with each other through other functions of digital diaspora, such as zealous communication through social media and storytelling through online blogging. Furthermore, Brinkerhoff does suggest that digital diaspora leads to the construction of identity through storytelling⁸⁹ which this community of EU citizens illustrates well.

This chapter has not just highlighted that expats engage in digital diaspora, but the reasons behind their doing so and the methods employed. With the addition of the EU citizen study, this chapter has determined that a political change such as Brexit may cause a substantial rise in digital activity amongst expat communities through diaspora, as well as a diversity of ideas of belonging regarding exclusion and inclusion. For example, the testimonies indicate how notions of belonging are influenced by different factors besides simply being an expat during a political change. Such as those individuals who experience racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination from some members of UK society that exist alongside the process of Brexit. Furthermore, there are those testimonies that relate to notions of inclusion, and those expats who are not affected at all. Nevertheless, considering that a political influence such a Brexit changes the expat's perception of themselves, I argue that these identities, as explained by Brinkerhoff, are not permanent - they are hybrid.⁹⁰

Considering that expat case studies, such as the EU citizens, reflects upon the many mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion for expat communities, I reason that it is important to archive them for the sake of community legacy and a better understanding on expat communities. Therefore, the next chapter of this thesis will explore the value of expat material by building a case on why it should be

⁸⁸ Brinkerhoff, *Digital Diasporas: Identity and Transnational Engagement*, 29.

⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, 39.

⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, 40.

archived. Furthermore, the next chapter will also inquire into whom should archive it. In order to do this, the next chapter will explore the institutional options and leading principles of community archiving projects.

Chapter Two. Archiving expatriates

Chapter One has demonstrated that many communities of expatriates, like the EU citizens living in the UK, engage in digital diaspora and create content through online forums such as blogs and social media to exercise their notions of belonging regarding mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. This second chapter will aim to answer part of the main question being why and whom should archive expat material, both analog and digital, based on a discussion concerning the motives behind community archiving, and exploring the institutional options for archiving expatriates.

To begin, this chapter will use the example of the Windrush scandal to demonstrate why it is important to properly archive important documents belonging to expats. The Windrush generation, further described below, is a group of people who have the right to stay in the UK, but recent circumstances demand paper documentation to support this right. Then, to suggest who should archive expat material, this chapter will inquire into the institutional options such as the Expatriate Archive Centre (EAC) in the Hague, larger institutions such as the UK National Archives, and community archiving projects, and how these institutions establish an ethos and a method for archiving expatriates.

Between 1948 and 1971, the UK invited immigrants to come over from Caribbean countries such as Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados. This group of people are now referred to as the Windrush generation. The name came from the ship that they arrived on in the UK called the MV Empire Windrush. The UK invited this group of people to aid the British in reconstructing the damages caused by the Second World War. In 1971, these individuals were granted permanent residency by the UK government, meaning they were free to take up employment and education as a UK citizen.⁹¹

In 2018, media across the UK began reporting the Windrush scandal. It was reported that a substantial amount of landing cards dating back to the 1950s and 1960s had been discarded by staff in the Home Office – despite being advised not to. This document was evidence of the Windrush generation’s right to live in the UK, and without them, people of the Windrush and even their family members are unable to prove their right to reside in the UK. This resulted in thousands facing

⁹¹ Aljazeera, ‘The UK’s Windrush generation: What’s the scandal about?’, Al Jazeera News, 18 April 2018. <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/04/uk-windrush-generation-scandal-180418074648878.html>> [accessed 9 June 2019].

deportation. For example, David Lammy MP was contacted by a woman who came to the UK as part of the Windrush generation, claiming her son was facing deportation after two failed applications to remain in the UK.⁹²

Many people who belong to the Windrush generation do not possess a passport despite being told they were British, therefore the valuable nature of the landing card documents becomes clear. An online media source - the Express, quotes one staff member from the Home Office on this issue: “People were writing to say: ‘I’ve been here for 45 years, I’ve never had a passport, I’ve never needed a passport. Now I’m being told I’m not British.’” The staff member continues to explain, “Because it was no longer possible to search in the archive of landing cards, people would be sent a standard letter that would state: ‘We have searched our records, we can find no trace of you in our files.’”⁹³ This story of the Windrush puts into perspective the importance of certain documents belonging to expat communities, why they should be archived, and highlights the consequences that come with ineffective archival procedures.

In order to determine who should take on the responsibility for archiving such important documents belonging expats, this chapter will now inquire into the institutional options of archiving expat material. The first institution this chapter will look at is the EAC, whose mission it is to collect and preserve life stories of expats around the world. Director Kristine Racina, Archivist Eva Barbisch, PR Manager Kelly Merks, and Office Manager Fadime Uzun run the expat centre. The History of the EAC starts with two anthologies published in the 1990s for the “Shell” families all over the world. In 2003, a family archive was opened in the Hague to continue the work of the Shell anthologies. The archive became independent and was renamed the EAC in 2008 to archive the lives of expats around the world.⁹⁴ The main objectives of the EAC are to curate and preserve unique source material that documents expat experiences including expats of all nationalities and backgrounds. Furthermore, the centre is for expat research purposes and to provide a safe refuge for expat stories. The EAC also wish to promote a better understanding of the lives of expats.⁹⁵

The EAC’s definition of an expatriate is someone who lives temporarily in a country other than their

⁹² David Maddox, ‘Thousands face deportation as Home Office destroyed original Windrush landing cards’, Express, 18 April 2018. <<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/947696/windrush-generation-home-office-destroyed-landing-cards>> [accessed 9 June 2019].

⁹³ Maddox ‘Thousands face deportation as Home Office destroyed original Windrush landing cards’.

⁹⁴ Expatriate Archive Centre, About Us (2019), <<https://xpatarchive.com/about/>> [accessed 9 June 2019].

⁹⁵ Expatriate Archive Centre, About Us.

own “home country”⁹⁶. The centre collects material in any language ranging from diaries and journals, letters and emails, blogs and websites, audio and video files, tickets and invitations, and other documents.⁹⁷ To specify tickets and invitations, these documents include travel and transport tickets covering plane, boat, train, seasonal passes, entrance tickets for events, and social gatherings. Other documents entail miscellaneous items such as books, packing lists, certificates or awards, programmes, school reports, and much more.⁹⁸ The EAC vow to handle all material with care through tactical procedures involving the steps of selecting, shipping, sorting, and scanning. The centre encourages people to submit their expat stories and experiences and ensures the privacy and confidentiality for those who donate.⁹⁹

I assert that the EAC holds strong principles involving promoting a better understanding of expat lives, and a promise to properly safeguard expat material. Their intake of a range of analog and digital material indicates that the centre is open minded and will be reluctant to reject documents with potential historical and personal value. Therefore, the EAC would be an appropriate host for personal documents of similar nature to the Windrush landing cards. Based on these implications, I argue that the EAC is dedicated to its cause, with a promising, positive, and passionate attitude towards safeguarding the lives of expats.

In contrast to the EAC, I found, albeit at first sight, that the UK National Archives holds little interest in promoting and preserving the lives of expats. Upon finding no documents entailing the keyword “expatriate” in the subject index on the National Archive’s webpage, instead I decided to look for digital content belonging to immigrants. 10 guides for the subject of immigration became available, and only 4 were available to view online. These guides were labelled “Alien arrivals”, “Aliens’ registration cards 1918-1957”, “Naturalisations cases papers 1801-1871”, and “passenger lists”. The search index also has guides on how to access emigrant material.¹⁰⁰ Based on the inability to arrive at a substantial amount of material by searching for expat material, and no direction to a paper inventory, I suggest that, at first glance, this website promotes poor access for researchers interested in documentation belonging to expats.

⁹⁶ Ibidem.

⁹⁷ Expatriate Archive Centre, Our Collection (2019), <<https://xpatarchive.com/collection/>> [accessed 9 June 2019].

⁹⁸ Expatriate Archive Centre, What We Collect (2019), <<https://xpatarchive.com/what-we-collect/>> [accessed 9 June 2019].

⁹⁹ Expatriate Archive Centre, Our Collection.

¹⁰⁰ The National Archives, Research guides (2019) <<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides-keywords/?show=keywords&keyword-letter=i&keyword=immigration#step-three>> [accessed 24 June 2019].

However, a first glance at the UK National Archives website is not enough to determine that this institution would be a bad host for expat material. Furthermore, there are more institutions like the EAC that work towards preserving material that belong to marginal groups in society that this chapter should address.

Regarding the UK National Archives, some scholars suggest that this institution, and others alike, are very appropriate places to archive expat material. For example, scholar in archives and information management Laura Millar suggests that when it comes to caring for archives from the point of creation, institutional archives are technically "the purest form of archival facility."¹⁰¹ Millar labels the UK National Archives, amongst others such as the Bundesarchiv in Germany, as examples of "public repositories with a primary focus on institutional archives care."¹⁰² This is a broad statement about large institutional archives, however, what about these types of institutions in the context of archiving expat material or material of immigrant nature?

Millar expresses her thoughts on good archival practice in these institutional archives by providing an example of archival material relating to immigrants, and how archivists should measure their practices in relation to this type of material. Miller highlights that in large institutional archives, it is important to measure the success of "outcomes." This means judging the impact of the programme or service. An example put forward by Millar is that if the archivist wishes to engage with an immigrant community, she should inquire into how successful the exhibit was - the exhibit being the outcome.¹⁰³ This is done through surveys or requesting other forms of feedback from the community on the exhibit that displayed their history. Miller suggests that a positive outcome would be "a greater sense of belonging and a belief that their community archival institution saw them as legitimate members in society."¹⁰⁴

Based on the above, I reason that it is important for large archival institutions to regularly measure their success in order to meet their primary objectives and build upon relationships with local communities such as expats. Furthermore, if archival institutions held exhibitions and measured their success rate based on feedback, this may help expat communities such as the EU citizens living in the UK by aiding them in building and preserving a sense of belonging.

¹⁰¹ Laura Millar, *Archives: Principles and Practices* (London Facet Publishing, 2017), p. 80.

¹⁰² Millar, *Archives: Principles and Practices*, 80.

¹⁰³ *Ibidem*, 142.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibidem*.

However, Millar says that archival institutions have not focused enough on evaluating their service as much as other establishments associated with community heritage such as galleries and museums¹⁰⁵; this point will be touched upon shortly. Even though there is an indication of how institutional archives can help expat communities, Millar does not specifically mention how the UK National Archives have achieved this objective. However, in relation to the topic of archiving expatriates, it is still interesting to know that measuring outcomes can help such communities.

Millar praises institutions like the UK National Archives and explains how they can help communities by working towards meeting their objectives, such as measuring their outcomes through communication and feedback. However, some scholars infer other conclusions regarding mainstream institutional archives and the management of material belonging to communities and groups of immigrants in society.

Author David Thomas explains that there is some concern over large archival institutions not meeting the needs of communities. Thomas refers to Flinn; who argues that "in reality the mainstream or formal archive sector does not contain and represent the voices of the non-elites, the grassroots, the marginalised."¹⁰⁶ Thomas explains that as a result, there are a number of community archives being established in Britain.¹⁰⁷ In order to explain the aim of community archives, Thomas again alludes to Flinn, who explains that community archives are spontaneous attempts to safeguard and make available a community's heritage and struggles, especially if the community experiences significant change, identity loss and marginalisation.¹⁰⁸ Flinn also suggests that a community is linked based on "locality, culture, faith, background, or other shared identity or interest."¹⁰⁹

Thomas suggests that communities pose a challenge for traditional archival institutions. He continues to explain that this is concerning in particular for some immigrant communities; without specifying who, some communities believe that large archival institutions rarely hold records regarding immigrant experiences and feel as though these communities are not in the interests of institutional collections.¹¹⁰ However, Thomas surfaces those community archival establishments who value the collections of immigrants and other groups in society. According to Thomas, the UK Community

¹⁰⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁰⁶ David Thomas, Et Al, *The Silence of the Archive* (London Facet Publishing, 2017), p. 18.

¹⁰⁷ Thomas, *The Silence of the Archive*, 18.

¹⁰⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁰⁹ Ibidem.

¹¹⁰ Ibidem, 19.

Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) states that their member groups "make an invaluable contribution to the preservation of a more diverse local and national heritage... [and they] seek to document of all manner of local, occupational, ethnic, faith, and other diverse communities."¹¹¹

So far, this discussion has suggested that mainstream archival institutions can measure outcomes and aid immigrant communities by exhibiting their legacies and build upon a sense of belonging. Nevertheless, there is some concern over larger archival institutions being less engaged with marginalised groups than some community archives. Therefore, it is worth inquiring into community archives in order to understand who should archive expat material, which this chapter will now explore starting with the aims and definitions laid out by CAHG.

CAHG is a national group which aims to support community archives in the UK and Ireland. It is a Special Interest Group of the Archives and Records Association (ARA) in the UK and Ireland, run by volunteers and professionals, however, their website does not specify the individuals who regularly manage the constitution.¹¹² The CAHG website states that the definition of a "community archive" is the cause of some debate. CAHG argue that, for many reasons, some think that a community archive is a type of project, the reason being, for example, that the subject-matter of a collection can be a community of people. For instance, a group of people who live in the same place, or hold similar interests linked to a location such as a place of work and a certain type of profession.¹¹³ Furthermore, people assume that the process of the collection's creation is made by the community, often involving volunteers working alongside professional archivists, then becoming a collaborative project.¹¹⁴ CAHG explain that they take a broad approach to the definition, meaning that if an organisation or project identify as a community, CAHG will include them on their website.

However, CAHG briefly explains that if this approach starts to cause issues, they may have to modify their policy.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, CAHG explain that they are open for new members, with the condition that material belonging to communities must satisfy the requirement of being an archive. This means having a collection of some sort, for example, material should include primary sources such as photos, documents, oral histories etc. The community's collection can be physical, digital, or

¹¹¹ Ibidem.

¹¹²Community Archives and Heritage Group, About the Community Archives and Heritage Group (2019) <<https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/content/about/history-and-purpose>> [accessed 29 September 2019].

¹¹³ Community Archives and Heritage Group, What is a community archive? (2019) <<https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/content/about/what-is-a-community-archive>> [accessed 29 September 2019].

¹¹⁴ Community Archives and Heritage Group, What is a community archive?

¹¹⁵ Ibidem.

both.¹¹⁶

Regarding the existence of CAHG and the EAC, it is interesting to explore why these groups may think it is important to archive communities in society. Furthermore, considering the concerns raised by Thomas over mainstream archival institutions, this chapter will explore the debates surrounding who should be archiving these communities, and why groups like CAHG and the EAC would be ideal candidates for archiving digital diaspora belonging to expat communities.

I will start the discussion on what defines a community and the concept of community history. To begin, historian Donald Ritchie explains that a community can be defined as "a group of people who share a common identity, whether based on location, racial or ethnic group, religion, organizational affiliation or occupation."¹¹⁷ Ritchie highlights that communities differ; some communities are eager to preserve their heritage and acknowledge the importance of it, whereas others need convincing of this importance.¹¹⁸

Ritchie indicates why community archiving projects help communities to preserve their heritage, and why such projects advocate this. Ritchie gives the example of the Discovering Community Heritage Project, which is based in inner-city Philadelphia, Temple University. Ritchie explains that this project aimed to engage residents of different neighbourhoods with their heritage and encourage them to document their past through oral history; photographs and manuscripts.¹¹⁹ However, the project ran into difficulties when they introduced themselves to the community and presented a slide show about the importance of heritage preservation, and the community seemed uninterested and disengaged.¹²⁰ Nevertheless, over time, the more the project persisted and communicated with the community, residents began to realise how their community looked to the outside world, and showed a greater understanding on the importance of recording their heritage.¹²¹

Based on Ritchie's example, I deduce that some projects such as the Discovering Community Heritage Project strive to help a community to engage with their heritage and acknowledge the importance of recording their history in order for society to gain a deeper understanding of that

¹¹⁶ Ibidem.

¹¹⁷ Donald Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide* (Cary: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 223.

¹¹⁸ Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide*, 223.

¹¹⁹ Ibidem.

¹²⁰ Ibidem, 224.

¹²¹ Ibidem.

community. Ritchie's example also highlights the issues that come with trying to engage with a community, such as receiving negative responses, however, if such projects persist, they may be able to convince the community that their heritage is important to record.

Similarly, to Ritchie, author and librarian Suzanna Conrad discusses projects concerned with community archiving, but in the context of digital storytelling, and explains the importance of recording multimedia that entails narratives generated by a community. Conrad argues that digital narratives are important within a community; she explains "personal stories can function as a means of building a community by connecting community members to one another through a shared archived history", and "in an age where the exchange of personal letters is no longer the standard, digital storytelling is a new form for documenting an individual's experiences, whether through multimedia video creations, blogs, podcasts, activities on social networks, or other story forms."¹²² Conrad continues to explain that personal stories online can promote outreach and activism, education, and the archiving of local history.¹²³

Regarding the valuable nature of personal stories online, such as entailing a community's historical significance, Conrad narrates the accounts belonging to an intern at a public library in South Carolina called Monterey Park Bruggermeyer Library, and their aims and experiences of preserving digital community storytelling.¹²⁴

Conrad explains that the purpose of the project was to assist librarians in recording memories within their own communities. Furthermore, Conrad notes that the librarian who led the project asserted that she wished to make local history more accessible to the community. The project collaborated with the local museums, and other organisations throughout the city in order to achieve these goals.¹²⁵ The project received a grant - although Conrad does not specify from whom, only that it was an outside institution - and installed basic equipment in the library such as an iMac for the purpose of creating digital stories. This equipment involved a handheld video camera, an external hard drive, a scanner, an audio mixer, and much more. The institution who provided the funding also offered training for the equipment.¹²⁶

¹²² Suzanna Conrad, 'Documenting Local History: A Case Study in Digital Storytelling', *Library Review*, 62. 819 (2013), 459-471, p. 459.

¹²³ Conrad 'Documenting Local History: A Case Study in Digital Storytelling', 459.

¹²⁴ Ibidem.

¹²⁵ Ibidem, 465.

¹²⁶ Ibidem.

Conrad explains how the project started out with four volunteers, two library technicians, and one intern trained in editing stories on iMovie. The project expanded overtime, and more individuals started getting involved such as other librarians, clerks, and volunteers. These individuals were responsible for tasks involving communicating with the storytellers of the community. These tasks would involve selecting and scheduling storytellers, as well as collecting release forms from storytellers and informing the community about the project. These stories involved topics on multiculturalism, art, and local history.¹²⁷

Similarly to Ritchie's example, this project also aimed to promote the importance of stories belonging to the storytellers and encouraged them to share their experience. Conrad points out the struggles that the project experienced. For example, the project found it difficult to communicate with the public, and technical and operational issues. Furthermore, tasks were incredibly time consuming, such as the time taken to edit oral testimonies.¹²⁸ Conrad argues however, that the project was successful, and that stories from the local community were documented and distributed online, allowing anyone to view the stories of local historical significance. Furthermore, local residents were offered benefits involving the use of new services available at the library where they could also research the local stories.¹²⁹

Some community archiving projects, such as the example given by Conrad, perceive testimonies as educational and activist phenomena which can enrich the understanding of local heritage belonging to communities. A community archiving project can aid communities in understanding the historical significance encompassed in their heritage. Furthermore, projects who receive funding can support communities in recording heritage and making it accessible through modern and effective resources. Projects may face problems, such as technical issues, however, with training they can seek to overcome this dilemma.

The examples put forward by Ritchie and Conrad demonstrate the substantial effort put in to preserving stories carried out by community archiving projects because they believe that material created by communities is valuable and archiving it can benefit a community and its legacy. For example, a benefit put forward by CAHG would be to bring establishments together and work on projects. Furthermore, Ritchie suggests that community archiving offers educational benefits such as

¹²⁷ Ibidem, 468.

¹²⁸ Ibidem, 466.

¹²⁹ Ibidem, 71.

a deeper understanding of a community's history.¹³⁰ Moreover, Conrad indicates that archiving community heritage allows individuals to exercise activism.¹³¹

Conclusion

The example of the Windrush generation aimed to provide a flavour of why documents belonging to expats are important such as references to individual rights. Having explored this, this chapter proceeded to look into the institutional options of archiving expat material and immigrant communities. The EAC and CAHG demonstrate that expat and community archival institutions are good repositories for expat material, as they strongly value material belonging to expats and immigrants. This chapter also explored mainstream archival institutions such as the UK National Archives, for example, and how larger archival institutions carry out good archival procedures such as measuring outcomes, which benefit communities such as immigrants making them feel like valued members of society.

However, there is concern over the extent to which these institutions engage with immigrant material, and that community archiving projects would be more advantageous to communities. For example, the Monterey Park Bruggermeyer Library were dedicated to helping the community understand how the preservation of their stories could be beneficial, such as protecting their historical legacy. Therefore, I conclude that a community expat archive should handle expat material to ensure the safeguarding of expat lives and legacy encompassed in their digital and analog material. In relation to the case study of the EU citizens, this is worth considering moving into the third chapter of this thesis.

The next and final chapter will aim to answer the final part of the main question on how to archive expats and their digital material. It will explore effective, modern methods of archiving content created by expat digital diaspora that exist on blogs and social media. The technicalities of this will be discussed to demonstrate how an EU citizen archive can effectively preserve its digital diaspora and expat notions of belonging. This hypothetical situation is inspired by the EAC, CAHG, and other community archiving projects that wish to preserve community legacy.

¹³⁰ Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide*, 223.

¹³¹ Conrad 'Documenting Local History: A Case Study in Digital Storytelling', 459.

Chapter Three. Discussion: Archiving the EU citizens living in the UK

The previous chapter explored why and who should archive expatriate material, now this final chapter will aim to answer the final part of the main question; how digital material created by expats through blogs and social media can be archived, and the issues that follow these technical procedures. The first section of this chapter will investigate the technical procedures of capturing, storing, and preserving online content. Then, the second part of this chapter will create a hypothetical situation of an EU citizen archive and will apply previously discussed modern web archiving techniques to EU expats' ILP digital activity. Taking on the idea from previous discussions that this content entails societal and historical significance regarding notions of belonging, this chapter aims to advise the best way to archive the EU expat community, their digital activity, and their legacy.

3.1. Archiving blogs and social media

The EAC, CAHG, and community archiving projects indicate that they preserve digital content such as blogs and social media, and it is interesting to understand the technicalities behind these archiving procedures. Before exploring these procedures, this section will start by looking into scholarly insights and a historiography on web archiving.

Web archiving, in relation to traditional analog archiving, is briefly explained by Author Patricia Franks. Franks says that archiving social media hugely differs to archiving analog archives, and that for the archivist, the term "archive" alludes to transferring records from the creator to a repository legally able to appraise, preserve, and provide access to such records. However, Franks says that archiving in the context of social media means to capture and store content in a digital repository whilst complying with the rules of the service.¹³² This section will shortly return to Franks and further discussion on archiving social media.

To begin with some background on web archiving, professor in media studies Niels Brügger explains that web archiving started to emerge from the mid-1990s, mainly for the purpose of preserving cultural heritage. Archival web pages began being established shortly after the inventor of the

¹³² Patricia Franks, 'Managing Public Government Social Media Records', in *Social Media for Government: Theory and Practice*, eds. by Staci Zavattaro, M., and Thomas Bryer, A. (London: Routledge, 2016), Chapter 3 (p. 53).

internet, Tim Berners-Lee, published the first web page in 1991.¹³³ Based on the fact that it did not take long succeeding the establishment of a web page for its potential to curate cultural heritage to be recognised by internet users, I propose that this piece of information alone already demonstrates the urgency for archiving the web. Nevertheless, I notice that Brügger fails to mention the other reasons for archiving the web aside cultural heritage, such as general record keeping for personal and business reasons for the purpose of individual miscellanies or economical curation.

Diving deeper into the reasons for archiving the web, specialist in media and communication Stine Lomborg elaborates on the motives behind web archiving. Lomborg explains that web archiving allows researchers to gather texts and metadata to incorporate in an online data archives with the potential to be carried out in various types of analysis.¹³⁴ Lomborg mentions that in the past, research in social media has involved the collection of quantitative data for analysis concerning patterns of behaviour on sites like Twitter. However, explains Lomborg, social media archiving is also a very useful method for acquiring qualitative data especially for communicative studies. In this way, social media archives serve as useful data repositories for studying textual interactions between individuals on social media.¹³⁵

Researcher in computer engineering Savvas Zannettou touches upon similar views expressed by Rosenzweig regarding the vulnerability of information on the web. Zannettou suggests that web archiving plays a key role in today's "information system", by ensuring the continuity of information on the internet, or by gathering content subject to deletion or removal.¹³⁶ I agree with Zannettou and Rosenzweig that it is important to protect digital content creation on the web, and it was previously emphasised by Rosenzweig that this preservation is necessary for the contemporary researcher, much like the reasons for collecting qualitative and quantitative data described by Lomborg. However, it is worth inquiring into the troubles that researchers may face when using web archives for research to understand the challenges that may come with attempting to archive the web.

For example, Brügger argues that the web is only useful for scholars if online information is properly

¹³³ Niels Brügger and Ralph Schroeder, *Web as History: Using Web Archives to Understand the Past and the Present* (London: UCL Press, 2017), p. 6.

¹³⁴ Stine Lomborg, 'Researching Communicative 'Practice: Web Archiving in Qualitative Social Media Research', *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 30.3-4 (2012), 219-231. (p. 221).

¹³⁵ Lomborg 'Researching Communicative 'Practice: Web Archiving in Qualitative Social Media Research', 221.

¹³⁶ Savvas Zannettou Et Al., 'Understanding Web Archiving Services and Their (mis)Use on Social Media', unpublished paper delivered at the '12th International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media' (Cornell University, 31 January 2018), p. 1.

collected, made accessible, and documented. Brügger explains that researchers may run into challenges with accessing information because web archives do not preserve every single thing on the internet. Therefore, if the scholar cannot access the right collections, he or she is unable to select the right amount of documentation to support their research.¹³⁷ A solution to this issue will be explored shortly concerning the technical procedures of archiving blogs and social media on online data centres such as the Internet Archive.

These scholars venture into the topic of why it is important to archive the web. Archiving the web has been an activity for researchers and archival institutions for over two decades. This is because since shortly after the establishment of the first webpage, websites have been recognised as useful tools for research, gathering various data, and analysis.

This section will now explore the technical procedures concerning archiving digital content such as blogs and social media. Archival scholar Catherine O’Sullivan argues that it is important to archive online blogs, and then explains how this can be done using modern archiving technology. O’Sullivan indicates that the same principles that exist within preserving cultural memory in the digital age can be applied to other electronic media such as blogs - a phenomenon which shows the gradual replacement of analog diaries.

O’Sullivan says that scholars who are engaged in the sociological and anthropological disciplines have always considered diaries as important sources which provide a cultural insight into relationships within society.¹³⁸ O’Sullivan points out that online blogs and analog diaries are similar in this way, however, they differ in the way that they are managed, maintained, and accessed. Considering this, O’Sullivan asks if archivists must adapt to new methods of archiving electronic records as opposed to the analog ones.¹³⁹

O’Sullivan asserts that some online blogs may have the potential to be permanent records on the Internet Archive. The Internet Archive is an online database that was launched in 1996 and offers the public free access to websites that date back to 1996. This archive holds 100 terabytes of websites concerned with institutional, organisational, and personal pages, and preserves and makes accessible

¹³⁷ Brügger and Schroeder, *Web as History: Using Web Archives to Understand the Past and the Present*, 12.

¹³⁸ Catherine O’Sullivan, ‘Diaries, On-Line Diaries, and the Future Loss to Archives; Or, Blogs and the Blogging Bloggers Who Blog Them’, *The American Archivist*, 68.1 (2005), 53-73. (p. 54).

¹³⁹ O’Sullivan ‘Diaries, On-Line Diaries, and the Future Loss to Archives; Or, Blogs and the Blogging Bloggers Who Blog Them’, 54.

websites that may have been deleted from the internet in the past. O’Sullivan uses the example of Magdalena Donea’s online diary called *Moments* to illustrate this, which was blog deleted from the internet in 2000, but can still be viewed on the Internet Archive if the online diary’s URL is typed in. O’Sullivan mentions that even though this database is a useful method of preservation, it still comes with limitations. For example, some sites are not able to be recovered on the Internet Archive due to security policies or because the administrator of the original website requested that it be removed from the Internet Archive.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, O’Sullivan makes it clear that it would not be practical to store every single online diary for the sake of history. Instead, archivists should first adopt an appropriate method of appraisal and selection, and must focus on how relevant blogs are for research within their historical discipline.¹⁴¹

O’Sullivan says that one way archivists can collect and preserve material online is by installing a web crawler on their system, which is similar to what the Internet Archive does. This crawler ventures onto the web, identifies, selects, captures, and preserves digital content.¹⁴² For the repositories solely interested in online blogs, a web crawler would be able assist in recognising and selecting online diaries most relevant to the archives’ collection. O’Sullivan also notes that a web crawler can have a warning system installed, which can alert archivists of web pages that cannot be archived due to security reasons.

However, O’Sullivan highlights the issues that come with archiving methods that involve using a web crawler and an online archival database. For example, such capture and presentation procedures may disregard the integrity of the content, since copies of the original may already be orbiting the web or Internet Archive.¹⁴³ Furthermore, purchasing hardware and software for a system to set up a web crawler, as well as employing workers who can conduct the technical work, may be expensive.¹⁴⁴ O’Sullivan says that people may disagree with archiving online blogs because they should not be taken out of their “natural environment” or they could lose all meaning. However, since electronic records are disappearing so fast through neglect and ignorance, the scholar is adamant that archivists must carry out their duty to aid researchers and preserve history.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰ Ibidem, 71.

¹⁴¹ Ibidem.

¹⁴² Ibidem, 72.

¹⁴³ Ibidem.

¹⁴⁴ Ibidem.

¹⁴⁵ Ibidem, 73.

O'Sullivan suggests that online blogs serve as valuable source material for researchers, that should be archived, and that archivists should take on this responsibility by conducting modern digital archiving procedures. Towards the end of this section, these types of technical procedures will be looked at in more detail regarding issues of archiving social media.

Similarly to O' Sullivan, archives and records specialist Donghee Sinn, and information expert Sue Yeon Syn, believe that archivists have always been interested in the importance of preserving personal information, and that email and blogs should be considered by archivists to avoid information becoming lost.¹⁴⁶ However, one way to preserve personal documentation online is by the user themselves operating archiving tools. Sinn and Syn explore these technical ways for the creator to archive personal information online such as email.

Sinn and Syn conducted a survey with 345 email and blog users on how they archive their personal online content.¹⁴⁷ The participants amounted to 135 information professionals including librarians, archivists, and people acquainted with archival and library sciences, and 210 non-information professionals.¹⁴⁸ It was noted that users valued their email and blog content, they knew of the risks regarding their content becoming lost, and wished for it to be preserved. However, many email and blog services offer little assistance for individuals wishing to archive their personal information, and users were unaware of how to access the correct tools to conduct such procedures.¹⁴⁹

The study showed that the most common tools used by participants were the simple "save as" method, Outlook, Thunderbird, Google desktop, LJbook, and Frul, which are programmes that entail the function to save content from both email and blogs. However, participants claimed that these methods were ineffective ways to preserve personal data.¹⁵⁰ The survey then asked the participants what they thought makes archiving tools efficient, who responded then responded with the necessary functions: retrievability, usability, storage capacity, compatibility in formats and layouts, and coverage of data formats.¹⁵¹

Syn and Sinn conduct another survey regarding the archiving of digital and personal documentation,

¹⁴⁶ Donghee Sinn and Sue Yeon Syn, 'Personal records on the web: Who's in charge of archiving, Hotmail or archivists?', *Library & Information Science Research*, 33.4 (2011), 320-330. (p. 320).

¹⁴⁷ Sinn and Syn 'Personal records on the web: Who's in charge of archiving, Hotmail or archivists?' 320.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, 327.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, 320.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, 326.

¹⁵¹ *Ibidem*, 327.

but in this case the survey concerned personal information generated by social media sites such as Facebook. The scholars suggest that Facebook users may not consider themselves to be documenting and archiving their own content, nevertheless, they still may be doing so without being consciously aware.¹⁵² Sinn and Syn suggest that users thrive through the daily activity of connecting, sharing posts, and getting to know each other on sites like Facebook.¹⁵³ They explain how this activity generates content that “may signify a great heritage for contemporary people’s life stories without expending great effort by the individuals”¹⁵⁴. Therefore, explain Sinn and Syn, Facebook and other social media platforms will always serve as personal documentation tools, so long as Facebook continues to entertain and allow people to communicate with each other. In this way, Sinn and Syn conclude that social media itself acts as an archival repository for public history and social memory, which information professionals should take advantage of.¹⁵⁵

To summarise, Sinn and Syn argue that personal records online such as email, blogs, and social media, contain personal and historical significance. The scholars suggest that content produced by blogs and social media can be archived and preserved by the creator using certain tools such as Outlook, Thunderbird, Google desktop, LJbook, and Frul. However, these tools were deemed ineffective from the participant’s point of view. This concerns the user preserving their own content rather than the archivist using archiving tools that they download themselves. Another way for the creator to archive their own content is by taking advantage of the archiving tools that a service offers them.

Franks elaborates on the native archiving tools for social media – the tools that social media offers the user, and the most commonly available social media archiving methods. Franks explains that many social media services offer the function to archive content designed for the user to conduct themselves. However, she continues to suggest that this function may be difficult for organisations to use if they hold accounts on numerous social media sites. The most popular services used by organisations on a monthly basis since 2010 are Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.¹⁵⁶

Franks explains that organisations can take advantage of native social media archiving tools, for

¹⁵² Donghee Sinn and Sue Yeon Syn, ‘Personal documentation on a social network site: Facebook, a collection of moments from your life?’, *Archival Science*, 14.2 (2014), 95-124 (p. 120).

¹⁵³ Sinn and Syn ‘Personal documentation on a social network site: Facebook, a collection of moments from your life?’, 121.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, 120.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, 121.

¹⁵⁶ Franks, ‘Managing Public Government Social Media Records’, 51.

example, Facebook provides the option to download a zip file containing a HTML page called index.htm. This page contains links to the relevant information associated with the account such as images, contact details, wall activity, synced photos, videos, settings, security, advertisements, notes, mobile numbers, locations, and survey participation.¹⁵⁷ Twitter also possesses a similar function where all the information about a Tweet is preserved and accessed on an index page. However, links on the index leads to a live Twitter feed which means the content is subject to change or even deletion. LinkedIn also offers the option to access and preserve one's personal data. The user can download their content through accessing the Privacy & Settings page, and an email is sent to the user when all the content is compiled and prepared for download. This content may entail information of the users log in page, email history, recommendations, and advertisements.¹⁵⁸

Franks advises, however, if agencies make use of all these services, archiving content may become time consuming. One example of an agency who uses numerous social media sites is the US White House, which has accounts on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, Pinterest, Google+, LinkedIn, Flickr, Storify, Digg, and Myspace. Franks suggests that those organisations like the White House who use various social media services should take an automated approach to archiving their content.¹⁵⁹

Franks says that automation is possible and it is widely used in large archival institutions by carrying out a capture process by using web crawlers and harvesting tools. For example, the Maryland State Archives (MSA) uses this service for archiving web pages, blogs, and social media. The content extracted from these sites is displayed on the Internet Archive data centre. Organisations who use the centre are able to collect, catalogue, and manage their collections.¹⁶⁰ The installation of web crawlers however is usually conducted by professional technicians who possess the right resources to conduct these kinds of technical tasks.¹⁶¹ Therefore, it may be difficult for individuals to conduct this type of operation without professional assistance.

Franks says that organisations who wish to preserve social media content can also enter into an agreement with an archiving social media service. This would allow the agency to view the raw and

¹⁵⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁵⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁵⁹ Ibidem, 52.

¹⁶⁰ Ibidem.

¹⁶¹ Ibidem, 53.

native format of the content through an Application Programming Interface (API).¹⁶² Only few social media sites allow the use of APIs to capture user generated content, such as Facebook and Twitter.¹⁶³ This method will be elaborated on shortly, and Franks explains that conducting these types of technical procedures for archiving social media will ensure that organisations have a structure to comply with the developing social media applications.¹⁶⁴

The UK National Archives is another example of an organisation using modern technical procedures for archiving social media content. The UK National Archives has recognised that in order to continue its decade long routine of archiving government material online, it must archive social media. Since the establishment of the Web, the National Archives have pursued applying the way they archive online material with how government institutions make use of the web on the UK Government Web Archive (UKGWA).¹⁶⁵

For example, the UK government is known to make use of Twitter and YouTube, and information professional Suzy Espley explains that attempts to archive this content has previously failed due to files being lost, or becoming inaccessible due to its large file size. Espley indicates that the solution to this had to be to develop a certain strategy for archiving social media.¹⁶⁶ Nevertheless, issues come with creating complicated technical tools to conduct the process of capturing, preserving and providing access to social media content.¹⁶⁷ One solution would be to use an Application Programming Interface (API), a method that the Internet Memory Foundation (IMF) uses to capture content generated by Twitter and YouTube APIs.¹⁶⁸

Espley explains how Twitter feed is captured through an API: Twitter's API presents the metadata of a Tweet such as its date and time of creation, user account, the users mentioned, and its own unique URL. To archive this information produced by the API, the IMF created a specific method which involved using a tool to retrieve data in the form of an XML file (see fig. 11).¹⁶⁹ This format freezes

¹⁶² Ibidem.

¹⁶³ Management Association, Information Resources, *Social Media and Networking: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (Pennsylvania: IGI Global, 2015), p. 287.

¹⁶⁴ Franks, 'Managing Public Government Social Media Records', 58.

¹⁶⁵ Suzy Espley Et Al, 'Collect, Preserve Access: Applying the Governing Principles of the National Archives UK Government Web Archive to Social Media Content', *Alexandria: The Journal of National and International Library and Information Issues*, 25.1-2 (2014), 31-50. (p. 33).

¹⁶⁶ Espley, 'Collect, Preserve Access: Applying the Governing Principles of the National Archives UK Government Web Archive to Social Media Content', 33.

¹⁶⁷ Ibidem, 38.

¹⁶⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁶⁹ Ibidem, 39.

and presents the main information associated with the Tweet, i.e. Tweet ID, creation date, text, user, etc...¹⁷⁰ However, using Twitter's API is not a simple task. Espley explains that in order to gain access to this metadata, requests must be made to comply with Twitter's security restrictions and other policies. Access to such information is limited since there is a cap on how many requests can be made per hour. Nevertheless, the tool created by the IMF was designed to avoid the rejection of requests by retrieving clusters of Twitter feeds rather than individual Tweets.¹⁷¹

Espley explains that after the capture procedure, to archive and make information about a Tweet accessible requires a different series of tasks. The IMF produced an outline of an online archive page displaying replicas of Twitter feeds to fit the National Archive standards (see fig. 12).¹⁷² Espley explains that Twitter does have its own archive, however, the page created by the IMF was designed to provide quick and easy access to the Tweet in its XML form displaying detailed information concerning metadata, as well as an option to view the live original Twitter feed.¹⁷³

Espley explains that these types of modern procedures will be challenging for some archivists, who may have to adapt to new ways of archiving new things, such as social media content.¹⁷⁴

Nevertheless, Espley justifies that the use of APIs and the creation of other digital archiving tools is an effective and improving method to archiving social media content.¹⁷⁵

```
<status>
  <created_at>Sat Jul 14 14:25:56 +0000 2012</created_at>
  <id>224147720775016448</id>
  <text>Pic: Keen spectators watch the #London2012TorchRelay between Hamworthy +
  Poole, from the top of a ship's mast! http://t.co/pCUSfOIO</text>
  ...
  <user>
    <id>19900778</id>
    <name>London 2012</name>
    <description>Official Olympics and Paralympics channel - Sport, culture, behind the
  scenes information and opinion on the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic
  Games</description>
  </user>
  ...
  <retweet_count>99</retweet_count>
  ...
</status>
```

Figure 11. Example of a Tweet in XML format.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁰ Ibidem.

¹⁷¹ Ibidem, 40.

¹⁷² Ibidem, 43.

¹⁷³ Ibidem.

¹⁷⁴ Ibidem, 46.

¹⁷⁵ Ibidem, 47.

¹⁷⁶ Ibidem, 39.



Figure 12. IMF Twitter reader prototype.¹⁷⁷

The UK National Archives is one of many institutions concerned with archiving social media, and Espley has pointed out that some archivists may struggle with new methods of archiving. However, adapting to new technology is not the only issue, a project conducted by the South Carolina State Library (SCSL) to archive social media highlights the burden of financial sacrifices that come with web archiving. Author Matt Enis reports in an article the launching of a new archiving project established by the SCSL. This project aimed to archive Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube content produced by the South Carolina State. The project hugely promoted the aspect of making content accessible, therefore it set up an online portal for the public called “socialmedia.org”¹⁷⁸. Unfortunately, it came to my attention that this URL had expired, nevertheless, it is worth appreciating how this institution tackled affairs concerning archiving social media.

Commentator Amanda Stone explains the main motivations of the project. Since more and more citizens of the state use social media to communicate with their government, the project wished to ensure the preservation and safeguarding of interactions to avoid them becoming lost or deleted.¹⁷⁹ However, Stone suggests that these projects face huge difficulties, and that future information professionals will be establishing budgets that were never considered in analog archival institutions.

¹⁷⁷ Ibidem, 43.

¹⁷⁸ Matt Enis, ‘Technology: SC Library Launches Social Media Archive’, *Library Journal*, 138.18 (2013), 1 (p. 20).

¹⁷⁹ Enis ‘Technology: SC Library Launches Social Media Archive’, 20.

Even though there is the prospect of a good investment, the project would have cost a large sum of \$7,000 granted by the Museum and Library Services in its initial year.¹⁸⁰ Furthermore, the non-existent web URL suggests that the project may have been unsuccessful, which puts into perspective how such projects can fail due to insufficient funds.

This section indicates many ways to archive digital content such as social media and blogs. For example, O'Sullivan suggests that archivists can archive online blogs using web crawlers to convert material like blogs into permanent records onto the Internet Archive. In this way, archivists can use web crawlers to their advantage by prioritising the most relevant information for their repositories. O'Sullivan did mention that duplicating blogs may eliminate its original essence, however if it is not done, blogs could be erased from history. Sinn and Syn suggested that email, blogs, and social media sites that consist of personal records and social memory, can be archived by the creator with common archiving tools such as Outlook, or by using the social media site as an archival repository itself, e.g. Facebook.

This section elaborates more on the technicalities of archiving social media. Franks briefly discusses that social media offers archiving services, although agencies who hold accounts on numerous sites may find it difficult to take advantage of them. Franks then suggests that large corporations could collect and archive their data quicker by using web crawlers and APIs. Espley describes these procedures in more detail by explaining how metadata provided by APIs is converted into accessible formats such as XML files, which entail and present information more clearly on a government archive data centre with the option to view the original feed.

However, issues come with the establishment and use of digital tools for social media archiving projects. For example, the changes and developments from archiving analog material to digital may take time for some archivists to adapt. Furthermore, the broken link of the SCSL project may indicate the project had failed emphasising the financial consequences that projects must prepare for. Even though there are financial and occupational implications, the above discussions indicate that archivists should conduct modern technical procedures to archive social media content as an emerging and effective solution to preserve digital content which may hold social, cultural, and historical significance for archival repositories.

¹⁸⁰ Ibidem.

The next section of this final chapter will apply the hypothetical use of web crawlers, archival software, and social media archives to the EU citizens' case study, and the issues that may follow archiving their digital diaspora.

3.2. An EU citizen expat archive

Throughout the course of this thesis, the previous chapters have discussed why and who should archive expat material, and how archivists and archival institutions can work towards archiving blogs and social media. This section will now apply these previous discussions to a hypothetical EU citizen expat archive.

An EU citizen archive should aim to archive both analog and digital material as both have proven to be valuable to the lives of expats. Like the landing cards belonging to the Windrush generation, analog documents are vital to the EU citizens in the context of Brexit for applying for settled status to prove their right of stay. Furthermore, notions of belonging generated by individuals through online blogs and social media posts also hold historical significance through a drastic political change. With the addition of scholarly notions such as that if blogs are not archived then society could be dealing with a mass cultural memory loss.¹⁸¹ Therefore, it is sensible to suggest that groups of expat communities like the EU citizens should archive both their analog and digital content.

To establish an archive for the EU citizens living in the UK is a hypothetical situation, but I do not deem it to be completely unrealistic. The ILP generate vast amounts of social media content which consistently establish notions of belonging influenced by political events and even issues that have stemmed prior to Brexit. Therefore, I reason that in order to preserve legacy and avoid memory loss, the investment to archive this expat community is an honourable reason. However, who could run and help fund such an archive? The government, EU citizens themselves, or other archival institutions, could all be an option.

An appeal to the government for support is possible, however, a petition for the government to fund such an archive concerned solely with the EU citizens living in the UK could be a lengthy process. Furthermore, support would be required from the public to establish such a petition, and it cannot be

¹⁸¹ O'Sullivan 'Diaries, On-Line Diaries, and the Future Loss to Archives; Or, Blogs and the Blogging Bloggers Who Blog Them', 54.

said that everyone is interested in the lives of EU citizens.

Concerning a self-governing archive where in theory the EU citizens manage their own archive, I had asked the project's administrator, Elena Remigi, if the ILP have their own certified archive. The response I received was that the archive is private, so I am unable to inspect the nature of this archive. Nevertheless, *the3million* and the ILP are new, non-for-profit organisations and cannot be expected to fund a fully functioning archive, despite the publication of two books. Even though the EAC and CAHG are also non-for-profit organisations and appear successful, they also gain the support of volunteers, professional archivists, donations, and funding. Like these establishments, if the ILP collaborated to collect donations, continued to work with and appeal to politicians to develop their cause, and hired volunteers educated in the archival and migration disciplines, I reason that the EU citizens could acquire a decent repository managing a wide range of material similar to the EAC and CAHG. However, there is more to suggest that this may not be enough for the EU citizens to establish a working archive.

The ILP is a self-governing group, and therefore it would make sense for them to assemble a community archive, and possibly with the support of a community archiving project. Having explored community archiving in Chapter Two, I indicated that a community based project would be most beneficial to the EU citizens due to its main principles and aims to preserve, protect, promote, and make accessible community identity, legacy, and heritage. However, Sarah Baker, a researcher at Griffith University and Jez Collins at Birmingham City University, highlights the issues that community archives experience online.

In the context of online communities of popular music preservation, Baker and Collins say that digital technology has allowed individuals, communities, and organisations to come together to document, preserve and share collections concerned with saving music histories, heritage, and artefacts.¹⁸² The scholars share the same impression as Sinn and Syn on Facebook acting as an online repository. Baker and Collins explain that social media services such as WordPress, Blogger, Wikis, Twitter and Facebook, all become unintentional music archives – a place for people to access information on music heritage. These sites are called unintentional repositories, because the users who post information regarding music do not intend to preserve or archive music heritage.¹⁸³

¹⁸² Sarah Baker and Jez Collins, 'Popular music heritage, community archives and the challenge of sustainability', *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 20.5 (2017), 476-491 (p. 482).

¹⁸³ Ibid.

However, Baker and Collins indicate that the content governed by the social media users on these unintentional archives may be disregarded and “lost” due to the nature of social media and the general risks that come from simple erasure of content. They therefore conclude that community archivists should play a role in sustaining these important sites of popular music heritage.¹⁸⁴

Baker and Collins explain that community archivists actively seek out artefacts to archive and place in an appropriate repository to avoid negligence. Furthermore, community archives that have failed to acquire a public repository risk being shut down, and therefore also put heritage represented by the community at risk of becoming inaccessible or lost, or slip away from the hands of the community altogether.¹⁸⁵ Therefore, I think it is necessary for an EU citizen community archive to seek professional assistance including an appropriate archival team and repository if they wish to govern their own archives. Furthermore, I think that if the EU citizens made their archive public, they would be more likely to receive attention and support by promoting their cause and provide a better understanding of this group in society. A community archive run by the EU citizens with help of professional archivists and a technical team is possible. But the question of who funds the community archives and assistance still stands.

With an established community archive run by the citizens and volunteers, a repository run by EU citizens could gain support from large archival institutions like the UK National Archives by applying for funding and seek proactive advice. The UK National Archives website offers guidelines on developing fundraising strategies before applying for funding. For example, assistance on creating a statement explaining why the applicant needs support, outlining what type of sources need to be funded, the different duties of individuals, realistic targets and timescales, and identifying a budget.¹⁸⁶ The National Archives also provides sources regarding transition funding and Heritage Lottery funding for general programmes. Transition funding is available for organisations in the UK who wish to learn strategies towards long term management of heritage, such as acquiring knowledge and new skills in management, leadership, and business. Furthermore, their website also offers research resources on funding regarding cataloguing, preservation, and digitisation of archives and books.¹⁸⁷ The National Archives website also includes links to information on National Lottery

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 488.

¹⁸⁶ The National Archives, Fundraising strategy (2019) <<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/funding-funding/fundraising-strategy/>> [accessed 13 June 2019].

¹⁸⁷ The National Archives, Current funding opportunities (2019) <<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/funding-funding/current-funding-opportunities/>> [accessed 13 June 2019].

grants for heritage, which includes applications for heritage projects to request funds from £3,000 to £10,000, £10,000 to £250,000, and £250,000 to £5million.¹⁸⁸

There is always the chance that applications will be denied. Nevertheless, if a community archive run by EU citizens and volunteers wish to preserve their expat material, applying for funding would be a good step towards gaining support in establishing an effective repository for the EU citizens living in the UK. Of course, this is a hypothetical situation that would take time and require money. Nevertheless, investing in a dedicated department for this specific group would be a solution to preserve digital material concerning content, such as vital documents, and notions of belonging generated through digital diaspora.

The final section of this chapter will now inquire into the best approaches towards archiving digital content created by the EU citizens living in the UK through blogs and social media. However, I am unable to demonstrate myself how to archive the content generated by the EU citizens since I lack the tools, technical team, and experience to conduct extraction and preservation methods for archiving the web. However, by applying the strategies suggested by scholars and performed by archival institutions to the digital content generated by the EU citizens i.e. the ILP, I aim to advise the best way to archive the EU citizens' digital diaspora.

Hypothetically, if the projects concerning EU citizens were able to establish a community archive, with volunteers, and with substantial funding from the government, archival institutions, or projects, they would then have the opportunity to hire information professionals. But most importantly, they would need to employ a skilled technical team to install and navigate the tools to carry out online archival procedures involving metadata extraction, preservation, presentation for accessibility, and comply with privacy policies. So, how would a technical team in the hypothetical EU citizen archive be able to assist? I propose that the EU citizen archive should employ: an online archive data centre; use of APIs; transferable API information formats; and web crawlers.

I will now focus on the extraction of content from the ILP's most popular social media accounts – Twitter, Facebook, and the Brexit blogs, starting with the ILP's Twitter account. An effective technical team would be able to make use of Twitter's API to access meta data concerning Tweets

¹⁸⁸ Heritage Fund, 1.3 National Lotteries Grants for Heritage: information and deadlines (2019) <<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/national-lottery-grant-heritage>> [accessed 13 June 2019].

posted by the ILP. Using an example of a Tweet which marks a historical event for the project - its two year anniversary (see fig. 13) could be a candidate for the archive. This Tweet is original and unique to the activities carried out by the ILP and marks the establishment and main cause of the project - giving the EU citizens a voice in society by coming together and communicating. Considering the nature of this Tweet, I reason that it holds historical importance which should be considered for an EU citizen archive. Information professionals, however, must comply by the rules of the service, such as casting requests to retrieve this information.

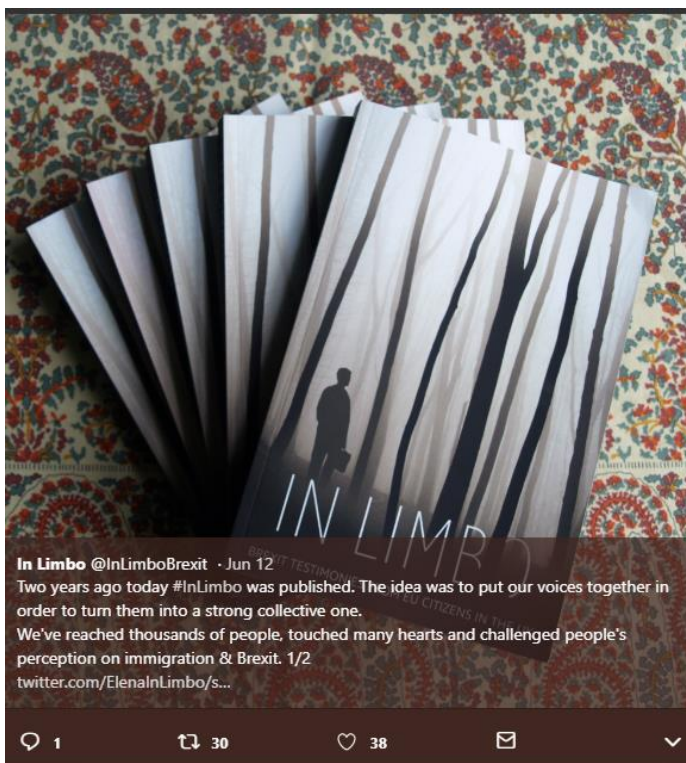


Figure 13. In Limbo @InLimboBrex Tweet.¹⁸⁹

Regarding Tweets like this, a technical team could access information about the Tweet through Twitter's API, however, retrieving information in the form of an XML file would improve the accessibility of the metadata. The Tweet has gained 30 retweets, 38 likes, and 1 comment. The metadata in the XML file would reveal explicit information on these constituents. For example, information regarding the retweets on an XML file would display exactly who retweeted it and when. However, information regarding these factors, like retweets, are subject to change as more and

¹⁸⁹ In Limbo (@InLimboBrex), 'Two years ago today #InLimbo was published. The idea was to put our voices together in order to turn them into a strong collective one. We've reached thousands of people, touched many hearts and challenged people's perception on immigration & Brexit. 1/2' (tweet), <<https://twitter.com/InLimboBrex/status/1138730620081848320>> [accessed 14 July 2019].

more people may retweet it. Therefore, I would advise that information professionals should employ an online archive data centre where the Tweet is displayed with the option to view its live feed.

Unlike Twitter, the ILP’s Facebook account does not just consist of micro posts and updates, it also entails digitised documents accessible under the file tab that exists within the “In Limbo – Our Brexit Testimonies GROUP” (see fig. 14). The existence of these documents on the ILP’s Facebook page demonstrates the thoughts of Sinn and Syn, and Baker and Collins, who explain that social media services like Facebook act as online repositories with potential risks of data becoming lost, and therefore archivists should consider archiving content on Facebook. These documents including Microsoft Word and PDFs, contain information regarding events that have occurred in parliament, the ILP, advice on personal wellbeing, guides on how to welcome expats and new migrants into the community, and the project’s communications with MPs.










Name	Type	Modified	
 ILtoo presentation letter.docx	Document	25 January at 23:02	...
 EUSS Briefing (Worcester).pdf	PDF	21 January at 15:59	...
 OurLoss_final18.10.18.pdf	PDF	7 November 2018 at 12:24	...
 OBT MH Day 10th October 2018.docx	Document	10 October 2018 at 00:29	...
 Migrant and Refugee Integration Relationsh...	PDF	12 August 2018 at 12:49	...
 Dear Benjamin.docx	Document	22 December 2017 at 13:50	...
 2017_09_18_building_emotional_well_being.p...	PDF	29 October 2017 at 19:30	...
 House of Lords meeting Formatted version.p...	PDF	13 October 2017 at 15:44	...
 Competition (1).pdf	PDF	9 July 2017 at 19:41	...

Figure 14. Supporting documents for members of the group “In Limbo – Our Brexit Testimonies GROUP”.¹⁹⁰

Not only are these documents regarded as important sources of information by the EU citizens from the ILP, but these files consist of rich primary source information for future research. For example, the document “Our Loss” was created through crowd sourcing which generated qualitative data on UK citizens and their relationship with the EU. I think that this information would be valuable for scholars across various disciplines such as migration and political studies, and sociology, and an online archive data centre would serve as an interface for future researchers to access this

¹⁹⁰ In Limbo – Our Brexit Testimonies GROUP, *Files* (2019), <https://www.facebook.com/groups/OurBrexitTestimonies/files/> [accessed 15 June 2019].

information. Original Tweets, primary source material for research such as file exchange, and other online content such as the testimonies from the Brexit blog, could potentially be extracted and uploaded onto an archival data centre uniquely structured for EU citizen material.

However, locating information can be challenging, as content is scattered all over the EU citizens' Facebook forums in the form of posts and comments. This becomes concerning because posts and comments may go unnoticed and forgotten. Figures 15 and 16 show the subtlety of testimonies that may be overlooked. Figure 15 is a post on the ILP Facebook forum created by an individual who expresses no concern over their situation in the context of Brexit, and figure 16 is a response to that comment.

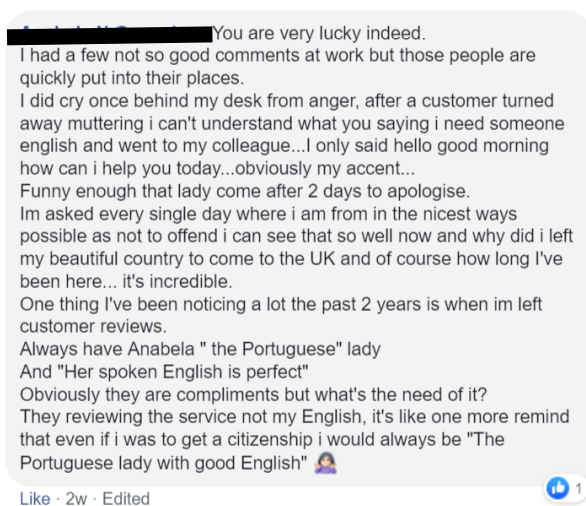


Figure 16. ILP member Facebook comment.¹⁹¹

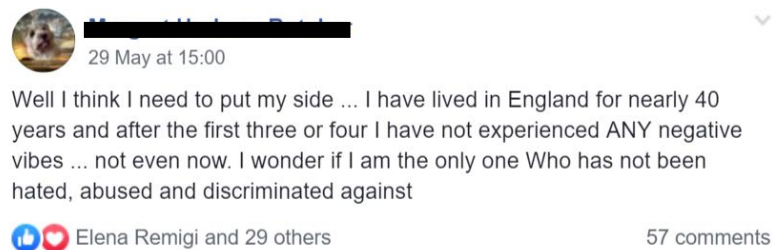


Figure 15. ILP member Facebook post.¹⁹²

This is the documentation of two individuals recalling experiences and expressing perceptions of themselves in society regarding a drastic political change, therefore, I argue that archivists should be concerned over the potential loss of this content. To avoid this type of information slipping away from the ILP's digital diaspora, I suggest that a technical team should install a web crawler to seek out less obvious testimonies that do not exist in files or on the Brexit blog, and create a space on the

¹⁹¹ In Limbo – Our Brexit Testimonies GROUP, *Files*.

¹⁹² In Limbo – Our Brexit Testimonies GROUP, 'Well I think I need to put my side... I have lived in England for nearly 40 years and after the first three or four I have not experienced ANY negative vibes... not even now. I wonder if I am the only one Who has not been hated, abused and discriminated against' (Facebook member post), <https://www.facebook.com/groups/OurBrexitTestimonies/?ref=group_header> [accessed 15 June 2019].

EU citizens archival data centre to display and preserve them.

A further reason for why an EU citizen archive should employ web crawlers, is because archivists or researchers who are concerned with expat digital diaspora, testimonies, or this particular group, can select the information most appropriate to their repository. Referring to Franks, accessing information concerned with every single post through a social media service's API would be time consuming¹⁹³, therefore a technical team should install automated methods such as web crawlers to seek out and extract the most relevant information for their online EU citizen repository.

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates that the EU citizens' digital diaspora deserves an appropriate repository, such as a community archive run by the EU citizens, assisted by volunteers, and aided by informational professionals with a technical team to carry out effective and modern archival procedures to capture and preserve social media and blogs on an online archival data centre.

Some scholars have raised issues about projects concerning archiving blogs and social media. For example, those archivists that must adapt to new technology and archival procedures such as the use of web crawlers and archival software. Furthermore, complying with social media privacy and security policies may hinder the extraction of social media content. However, if the hypothetical EU citizen archive were to employ information professionals and a technical team who are well acquainted with modern archiving procedures in the digital era, this shouldn't be an issue. Furthermore, there are indications as to why projects similar to this can fail, such as the SCSL. However, if the project were able to seek out financial and general support from larger institutions such as the National Archives, who are interested in assisting beginner archival projects with the motivation to preserve cultural heritage, an EU citizen expat archive has the potential to be successful.

¹⁹³ Franks, 'Managing Public Government Social Media Records', 52.

Conclusion

This thesis questioned to what extent expat communities engage in digital diaspora, why it is important to preserve expats and their material, who should archive it, and the best approach to archiving it. This thesis has also evolved from discussions on scholarly literature, to crafting a hypothetical situation to archiving the diasporic activity of the EU citizens living in the UK.

Chapter One demonstrates that expat communities, including the EU citizens living in the UK, heavily engage in digital diaspora through blogs and social media. This chapter also concluded that a drastic political change such as Brexit, influences notions of belonging for the EU citizens, and usually regarding exclusion. However, the EU citizen case study shows that the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion exist across a spectrum of influence, such as attitudes towards immigration, and racism and sexism. Furthermore, this study also highlights that some constituents in the community do not feel excluded in the UK during Brexit but choose to stay in the group to support those who do. This chapter concluded that these notions that exist online, created by digital diaspora, are important to archive due to their historical and societal significance, and the shaping of identities.

Chapter Two aimed to answer the question of why and who should archive expat material. This chapter suggests that expat material in general is sometimes vital to archive, because it can entail important personal reference and historical significance, as in the case of the Windrush landing cards. The best option for archiving expat content is archives that are dedicated to the cause of archiving expats such as the EAC, or community archiving projects that aim to safeguard and make accessible a community's heritage and struggles, especially through a significant change, a feeling of exclusion and strong notions of identity. Since issues like Brexit and attitudes towards immigration, apply to the expats of the ILP, and are reflected upon in their digital activity, this content should be preserved, ideally by one of the latter institutions. This chapter also suggests that larger institutions such as the National Archives hold good archiving principles but are less interested in the archiving of expats and community material. Nevertheless, it clearly states on the UK National Archives website that they aim to support small establishments, through means such as funding, which an EU expat archive would benefit from.

Chapter Three discusses how digital diaspora can be archived. This chapter ventures into the practicalities of archiving digital content such as blogs and social media, such as the use of web

crawlers, the Internet Archive, user operated archiving tools and APIs. Even though using these methods may come with issues such as financial burdens and occupational consequences, they still demonstrate effective preservation of online content. These methods were then applied to the hypothetical situation in archiving the EU citizens' digital diasporic activity. The hypothetical study suggested that the EU citizens' digital diaspora deserves a community archive, run by the citizens, volunteers, archivists, a technical team, and ideally with support from larger archival institutions to teach them how to fund and manage their repository. The establishment of such an archive would aim to ensure the protection of societal memory belonging to the EU citizens living in the UK and would provide primary source information for future research in political, cultural, societal, and historical studies.

This thesis has reflected upon the larger problem regarding the politics of archiving, for example, who should archive what, in which situation, and what material is relevant for certain archival institutions. Furthermore, throughout this thesis, the definitions of an expatriate have varied. However, a dedicated EU citizen archive would in theory aim to preserve, and promote an emic, rich understanding on these particular expats and their notions of belonging assembled through digital diaspora, whom seek to support and raise awareness of their position in the time of a significant political change.

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