



7/6/2018

# Diasporas and British Politics: The Construction and Engagement of Diasporic Communities in the Brexit Campaigns

Thesis for MA International Relations



Deanna Holroyd – s1958143  
LEIDEN UNIVERSITY

## Table of Contents

<b>1) Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
1.1) Introduction .....	2
1.2) Literature Review .....	4
1.3) Methodology .....	7
<b>2) The Muslim Diasporas</b> .....	<b>10</b>
2.1) Introduction to the Muslim Diasporas .....	10
2.2) The Construction of the Syrian Terrorist .....	11
2.3) The Construction of the Undesirable Turkish .....	14
2.4) The Invisible South Asian Muslim .....	17
2.5) South Asian Muslim Political Engagement .....	20
2.6) Concluding Remarks .....	23
<b>3) The South Asian Diasporas</b> .....	<b>24</b>
3.1) Introduction to the South Asian Diasporas .....	24
3.2) The Construction of the Integrated Indian .....	25
3.3) Leaving out in the Leave Campaign .....	29
3.4) The Engagement of South Asian Political Figures .....	31
3.5) Concluding Remarks .....	33
<b>4) The Eastern European Diasporas</b> .....	<b>35</b>
4.1) Introduction to the Eastern European Diasporas .....	35
4.2) The Construction of the Criminal Non-Labourer .....	36
4.3) Combatting Leave’s Anti-EU Migration Concept .....	39
4.4) Concluding Remarks .....	40
<b>5) Conclusion</b> .....	<b>41</b>
5.1) Diasporic Construction .....	41
5.2) Diasporic Engagement .....	43
<b>6) Bibliography</b> .....	<b>45</b>

## **Diasporas and British politics: the construction and engagement of diasporic communities in the Brexit campaigns**

### **1) Introduction**

#### **1.1) Introduction**

In the past 20 years, since the advent of Britain's turn towards New Labour, Britain has fashioned itself into a self-declared multiracial society - a neoliberal state in which a multitude of cultures, ethnic backgrounds and nationalities can coexist with minimal racism and negative repercussions (Sian, 2017). Much of this multiculturalism finds its roots in the increasing levels of immigration to the UK from Britain's former colonies. According to the most recent census, 13% of residents in England and Wales (equating to approximately 7.5 million people) were born outside the UK, with the three most-common countries of birth being formerly colonised India and Pakistan and economically developing Poland (British Census 2011). While these recently migrated residents certainly contribute to the multiracial society which the British government so highly prides itself on, Britain's history of multiculturalism spans much further than the last two decades; labour immigrants have been arriving since the start of the British empire and migrated en-masse at the end of WWII when the UK relaxed immigration laws to entice new foreign workers into the country and help compensate the lacking young labour force. The first foundation stones of Britain's path towards a multiracial, multicultural society were thus laid in the 1950s-60s when citizenship was extended to those immigrants permanently establishing themselves in Britain, state legislation banned racial discrimination, and policies were implemented to help immigrants integrate (Brown, 2006:120).

Many of these early labour immigrants chose to settle in the UK there with their direct and extended families, forming ethnic, cultural and racial enclaves, which later became diasporic communities. Although the term diaspora has historically been synonymous with the plight of fleeing Jews, it has recently been reworked to transcend the traditional definition of victimization and come to encompass a wider range of people. One of the leading contemporary diasporic scholars, Robin Cohen, believes that for a migrant community to be labelled a diaspora, they need to have several of the following characteristics: 1) have moved from their homelands to several foreign regions to escape trauma, search for work or colonise new regions 2) propagate an idealized collective memory and myth about the homeland and a loyalty to maintain or restore it to this idealized version 3) collectively desire to return to the homeland, whether that be a realistic or idealised notion 4) develop common history and the belief in shared destiny through strong ethnic group consciousness 5) believe they will never be truly accepted into their new host societies 6) promote a shared solidarity among co-ethnic

members of the group who have settled in other countries and 7) be able to live a comfortable and potentially enriching life in host countries (1996:515). This is only one argument among several in the complex debate of what constitutes a diaspora, but it is this rather flexible definition which will be applied from herein. In fact, when using Cohen's definition, it becomes clear that it is not simply the resettlement of migrants, but rather the co-existence of thriving diasporic communities alongside white Brits, which has contributed to this image of a multicultural, tolerant and neoliberal Britain.

Yet despite the pluralist political orientation of the past 20 years and the co-existence of various ethnic, racial and cultural communities, the post-racial multiculturalism propagated as an intrinsic quality of 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain has recently shown itself to be a political "fantasy" – a veneer to cover the persisting "deep structures of racialised injustice" (Sian, 2017). Nothing highlighted this more than the lead-up to the EU referendum, during which socio-political issues of cultural and racial divergence became closely intertwined with an inherently economic-centric, political decision. When the referendum was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016 to determine whether Britain should leave or remain in the EU, it presented the opportunity to question who can and should be allowed to live in the UK and under what conditions (Burnett, 2017:88). The Leave side of the campaign became an ideational space in which right-populist, racist and ultra-nationalistic sentiments could be expressed (Bachman and Sidaway, 2016:47) – sentiments which had previously been quietened at a national level under the guise of neoliberal tolerance and multiculturalism. The anti-migrant and Islamophobic racism rampant throughout the Western world, in part due to the War on Terror and the 2015 Syrian refugee crisis, intersected the context of the EU referendum and found legitimate means to influence instrumental political change (Burnett, 2017:88).

This racist anti-migrant narrative makes one question the extent to which the UK's diasporic communities, as the largest and most prominent source of immigrants and racial and cultural difference, were involved in the referendum. Or in other words, to form a more concrete research question, *how were these diasporic communities constructed during the campaigning period of the EU referendum, and to what extent were they then actively engaged in the political campaigning and voting?* This topic is still unexplored in the academic community and should not only shed light on the changing attitudes towards a multicultural British society which occurred around the referendum but should also give an indication of how members of diasporic communities engage with and are presented in British politics on a national and international level. In fact, Brexit provides an excellent political backdrop against which to explore this latter, relatively underexplored, topic, filling a scholarly void by using a relevant and contemporary case-study with which to explore active and passive diasporic involvement with national and international politics in countries of settlement.

In this introductory section, I will first highlight key pre-existing literature on the topic of both diasporic political involvement and Brexit, before then providing an overview of the methodological approach used throughout this thesis and a summary of the following chapters.

## **1.2) Literature Review**

This thesis has drawn upon, and hopes to build upon, two pools of relevant literature. The first pool pertains to diasporic involvement in politics and diasporic engagement with the host country's society. One of the central characteristics which distinguishes refugees and economic, fortune-seeking immigrants from diasporas is that diasporas becomes "collective phenomen[a]", whereby the group of individuals become "animated by an urge to preserve memories and traditional practices of the country of origin" (Ali, 2003:472). This notion that the country of origin should be central to an individual's new life in the host country becomes particularly relevant when looking at diasporic political engagement. As many scholars argue, political issues which affect the diasporic communities' countries of origin often become important points of political activity for diasporic individuals within their new host country. Both Bertrand (2004) and Østergaard-Nielson (2003) for example, explore how Cypriots in Britain are involved with socio-political organisations, founded and based in the UK, which are active in creating community centres, strengthening the Peace for Cyprus movement, offering direct economic support for political parties in Cyprus, and discussing human rights issues effecting Cypriot civilians. This political 'long-distance nationalism', as Benedict Anderson coined it (1992), is a reoccurring topic among diasporic scholars, with Byford (2012:718) arguing that the Russian diaspora within the UK is also engaged in homeland politics through the compatriot project – a political project advocated by the Russian government to strengthen national solidarity between resident and non-resident Russians. Similarly, Werbner claims that the Afghan and Iraqi wars, as well as the nuclear stand-off between India and Pakistan were all homeland political issues which mobilised the South Asian diaspora in Britain, particularly Muslims and Pakistanis, to protest on British streets and in the Houses of Parliament (2004:905).

This concentration on long-distance political engagement is one of two approaches which diaspora scholars have typically adopted. The second approach, as adopted by Hussain (2014), Sökefeld (2016), Sharma (2014) and Brown (2006) focusses on how diasporic communities are engaged with regional or national political issues in their host countries which directly concern the diaspora. Sökefeld argues that the Kashmiri diaspora uses civic, regional action such as adopting Pahari (the native language of Kashmir) and promoting the image of Kashmir as a Pakistani occupied region for the Kashmiris to be recognised by the British government as non-Pakistani nationals (2016:30). Brown meanwhile, claims that British Muslims, the majority with SA heritage, are more likely to vote for and be involved with a

British political party which promotes policies protecting Islamic beliefs, such as funding Muslim schools and implementing fair foreign policies with Muslim countries (2006:126).

Hussain furthers this argument, claiming that although private organisations and government funded projects initiated by the Indian diaspora are particularly active in promoting Indian culture (2014:191), the Indian diaspora is also somewhat engaged with national politics which may or may not directly impact them. He asserts that the increased presence of anti-immigrant candidates in recent elections has increased the level of national political engagement among young SA migrants (2014:200). This engagement, which typically manifests as voter support, occasionally extends to running for office either as an MP, a counsellor within local city councils, or as part of the Friends of India and British Indian Parliamentary Association (2014:200). Sharma supports this, statistically demonstrating the increasing numbers of Indian-origin political candidates in recent elections and stating that “the new generation among diaspora responds not just to the issues pertaining to the diaspora but they perceive themselves as British and make political choices as per mainstream British population rather than...as diaspora community” (2014:127).

Although Hussain and Sharma’s research demonstrates the increasing awareness among academic scholarship of the role that diasporas play in national politics, this is still overwhelmed by the research focussing on political long-distance nationalism, and on the engagement of diaspora-level and diaspora-relevant politics. Furthermore, the few works which do concentrate on the involvement of diaspora members in national-level elections and campaigns tend to only look at this in relation to the SA diasporas, and predominantly the Indian diaspora. This is understandable for several reasons; firstly, as the diaspora with the longest historical presence in the UK, there is more information on the political involvement of the SA diasporas than any other diaspora; secondly, as the largest diaspora it is likely that their political engagement on all levels is much larger than that of other diasporas; and thirdly, many members of the various SA diasporas are second or third generation British-born with fewer ties to the homeland, therefore likely increasing their level of personal investment in British politics rather than homeland politics.

However, by not expanding this research into how other diasporas are engaged with national politics, the academic scholarship on diaspora politics remains extremely limited. The political involvement of the Polish, Baltic, Pakistani and other Muslim diasporas remain almost entirely unresearched. This thesis thus aims to fill this void by exploring and comparing the engagement of multiple diasporas in British national-level politics and using the relevant and contemporary case-study of Brexit to do so. By focussing on the Brexit campaigns, this thesis will not only explore diasporas’ political engagement but also the construction of diasporic groups within politics and political campaigns, illuminating the political relationship between white ethnic British who predominantly created these political

campaigns, and diasporic minority groups. This should shed light on how the construction of diasporas impacts the political engagement of diasporic individuals.

For this case-study to be effectively utilised and for the construction of diasporic communities in political campaigns to be thoroughly explored, the second pool of literature which has been drawn upon is Brexit-specific. Due to the recentness of Brexit events, literature discussing the factors contributing to the referendum result is limited. However, more scholars are attempting to identify the causes and consequences of the referendum as negotiations are advancing. These scholars can be divided into two approximate schools of thought; those focussing on concrete quantifiable causal factors such as the UK's economy and the lack of Britain's European integration, and those who embrace a more constructivist approach by investigating the effect that British identity, race and culture had on the UK's desire to leave the EU. It is this latter school of emerging Brexit thought that has influenced this thesis more than the former, as these scholars address elements which contribute to the shaping of white British national identity and discuss how these have impacted anti-EU sentiment – thus introducing race, culture and ethnicity into the debate.

Virdee is one of the most prominent scholars in this field (2017) introducing the impact of post-colonial imperial longing on the Brexit outcome. Virdee argues that notions of race and nation within the UK are inherently attached to Britain's former empire, and these concepts were utilised within the Leave campaign in two different ways to help secure its victory. Firstly, the campaigns aroused feelings of imperial longing in the population to return Britain to its former glory. Secondly, they encouraged a narrative which suggested that Britain had lost its uniqueness, and everything which had once made the country so great, as a result of increased globalization and multiculturalism. As such, Virdee believes the campaigns channelled the notion of "reinstating the sovereign will of British people", which was so prevalent in the colonial era, whilst simultaneously politicising the concept of Englishness to reassert insular nationalism (2017).

In a similar way, Bachmann and Sidaway's article 'Brexit Geopolitics' (2016) argues that the geopolitical decline of the UK in the postcolonial era is key to understanding the factors influencing Brexit. He adds to this argument of Brexit postcolonialism, stating that economic and social inequality among the British population also contributed to the rise of British nationalism and populism. Tomlinson and Dorling (2016) are further advocates of this view that the downfall of the British empire created a longing for a return to colonial greatness, and that this impacted the support for the Leave campaign – particularly among the older generation who still have memories of the benefits of imperial greatness. They extend this argument, claiming that the migration of British empire and commonwealth subjects to the UK after WWII encouraged intercultural intolerance and inspired racist

sentiments towards immigration which, due to the UK's geopolitical decline, remain valid and important in 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain.

While this research supports and inspires this thesis' argument that post-colonialist racial issues and socio-cultural inequality between ethnic groups were all factors which the Leave campaign utilised to guarantee their success, these arguments nevertheless remain limited in their scope. Firstly, the analyses carried out by the above authors lack close readings of source materials such as the campaign material itself, which could help illuminate causal factors. Instead, to demonstrate their arguments, almost all Brexit scholars have chosen to exclusively focus on the outcomes and consequences of the referendum by analysing statistics such as the social positioning of voting groups and the increase in racial violence following the referendum. This thesis aims to overcome this limitation by analysing the campaign material of the Brexit campaigns – using actual source materials to demonstrate how the construction of diasporas reflects this post-colonial sentiment and is evidence of the increased nationalism and anti-immigrant narrative which accompanied the Brexit campaigns and contributed to the outcome of the referendum. The second way in which these analyses remain limited is by only acknowledging the ethnically-white British perspective. By only investigating the post-colonialism and racism which influenced the referendum votes of the white British public, these academic scholars do not acknowledge the important role of diasporic voters. This thesis should overcome this limitation by discussing political engagement from a diasporic perspective.

### **1.3) Methodology**

In order to effectively explore the research question, set out in the introduction, a methodology has been adopted which aims to successfully illuminate how national-level political campaigns present diasporic communities, and how they influence and encourage (or discourage) political engagement from diasporic individuals and white Brits. This thesis is therefore an observational and descriptive study which will follow a within-case research design, using the official materials from the 'Vote Leave' (VL) campaign (headed by right-wing conservatives such as Boris Johnson and Michael Gove), the 'Leave.EU' campaign (headed by UKIP's Nigel Farage) and the 'RemainIN' campaign (spearheaded by former prime minister David Cameron) to carry out a discourse analysis. The primary materials which have been selected for analysis are the official videos published by both camps and accessed through the official campaign YouTube channels, and the campaign pictures published on the timelines of each campaign's Facebook page. The social media aspect of these sources means that they were widely accessible and visible to a large proportion of the British public in the run up to the referendum and thus had the potential to influence voters – rendering them important sources for analysis. They will be supplemented with additional materials from various campaign websites as well as any relevant statistics published by the Office for National Statistics. Although voting demographics and statistics



on religion and ethnicity will be used in conjunction with the discourse analysis, this thesis is not a pragmatic analysis of the role of diasporas in the Brexit outcome, nor is it a simple casual analysis aiming to show how the campaign's construction of diasporas leads to a certain level of diasporic political engagement. Rather, this thesis adopts a hermeneutic agenda insofar as its aim is to analyse the construction of diasporic communities in the campaigns themselves, and consequently interpret and conceptualise diasporic political engagement in response to these campaigns.

This thesis' main analytical body will be divided into three distinct chapters with each chapter focussing on a different diasporic group and comparatively analysing the primary source materials from both campaign camps, using a complimentary combination of discourse analysis and semiotics. The first chapter will predominantly focus on diasporas with Islamic religious and cultural heritage, looking specifically at the Pakistani, Syrian and Turkish diasporas. The second chapter will explore the South Asian (herein SA) diaspora, focussing particularly on the Sikh and Hindu Indian diasporas. Immigrants from former British India (contemporary Pakistan, Bangladesh and India) have been selected as the primary topic of these first two chapters as they are the largest and most prominent diasporic communities in the UK. A distinction has been drawn between the Muslim diasporas and the other SA diasporas as the Islamophobic undertones intertwined with the referendum campaigns make Muslim involvement with Brexit a more complex and nuanced issue, deserving of a separate chapter. The third chapter is dedicated to European diasporas, exploring the political involvement of Eastern European diasporas, particularly the Polish and Baltic diasporas.

By focussing on such a wide geographical and cultural range of diasporas, this thesis aims to illuminate the polyethnic nature of these very communities, both in terms of how they are presented in British media and political campaigns and how actively engaged they are in the politics of their new host country. This will contribute to a variety of recent academic literature which has attempted to deconstruct the monolithic image of diasporas as one and the same of a large umbrella group. However, this all-encompassing and inclusive approach to diaspora research is not without its issues; the sheer diversity of diasporic groups within the UK, as well as the various conflicting definitions of what constitutes a diaspora, widens the scope of potential diasporic research too far for this thesis to thoroughly explore in sufficient detail. To combat this, the above mentioned diasporic communities have been selected as they have entered mainstream British consciousness as historically established communities and are thus the groups which I, as a British citizen, consider to be the most widely recognised and substantiated diasporas. Although this selection method is admittedly not without its subconscious biases, efforts have been undertaken to combat this through extensive research.

Furthermore, although best efforts have been made to explore a range of diasporas representative of the polyethnic reality of British society, the polyethnic nature of the diasporic communities themselves

is another problem area which is hard to combat in a research project of this scale. While this thesis attempts to differentiate between certain branches of diasporic communities, I will at times be forced to take a rather generalized view as delving into the discrepancies within the diasporas themselves would jeopardise the comprehension of the central argument. As such, while attempts have been made to combat over-generalizations, there may be times when the specificities of religious, ethnic, generational, temporal or geographical differences within a certain diasporic community are not thoroughly explored as they are not directly relevant to the overarching thesis.

## **2) The Muslim Diasporas**

### **2.1) Introduction to the Muslim Diasporas**

While the number of Christians is dwindling in the UK, Islam, the second largest religion, is becoming ever more prevalent, with 4.8% of the British population labelling themselves as Muslim in the 2011 census, as opposed to only 3% a decade previously. This equates to an estimated 2.7 million Muslims throughout the UK, with a high proportion of them settling in London, the West Midlands and Yorkshire. The heritage of these Muslim diasporas is extremely ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse – more so than any of the other religious groups within the UK (Nielsen, 2000:121). Although most British Muslims find their roots in South Asia, there are large cultural discrepancies between the Kashmiri Muslims who originate from Mirpur or Kotli, and the Bangladeshi and Indian Muslims. Moreover, the increasing number of Turkish, Middle Eastern and Black African Muslim immigrants is only adding to this diversity (Hinnells, 2000:86).

These “diversities of Islamic movements” within the Muslim diasporas (Kücükcan, 2004:245) not only stem from geographical, cultural and linguistic origins, but also from the wave of immigration with which they entered the UK, their eventual place of British settlement, and the various levels of multi-generational, British-born members within the diasporas. The Kashmiri Muslim diaspora, for example, first began arriving in the UK in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and clustered in inner city, urban areas such as Luton where there was an abundance of cheap property and low-skilled labour jobs available (Brown, 2006:160). Other members of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi diasporas began arriving en-masse after the 1948 Nationality Act (Kibria, 2012:230), with Pakistanis concentrating in the Pennines, West Midlands and former Northern industrial areas such as Leeds, Bradford and Manchester, while Bangladeshi communities predominantly settled in inner city London (Hinnells, 2000:83).

The location of these diasporas tends to reflect the average socio-economic status of their members; the prolonged history of low education levels in these former industrial areas where SA Muslim diasporas settled, means that they are relatively cheap areas to live in. Furthermore, living in ethnic enclaves means that new immigrants, who may be relatively uneducated and/or have limited English language skills, find themselves in an environment in which they can continue speaking their native tongue both socially and professionally, as they find low-skilled jobs working among members of the diaspora. In fact, as Brown points out, 65% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi households (the vast majority of which are Muslim), are classified as ‘low income’, in comparison to only 18% of white households (2006:132), clearly marking the averagely low socio-economic status of these diasporic communities.

Yet one important characteristic which unites the SA Muslim diasporas but differentiates them from the Turkish and Middle Eastern Muslim diasporas, is the high proportion of British-born members

within these diasporas. Due to the long history of SA migration to the UK, almost half of British Pakistanis are second or third generation migrants who are born in the UK, while 36% of Bangladeshis are British born (Hinnells, 2000:85). This means that unlike the relatively new phenomena of labour-seeking migrants from Turkey who predominantly settle in London (Küçükcan, 2004:248), and the recent influx of political refugees from Lebanon, Algeria, Tunisia, Sudan and Syria who have joined the estimated 400,000 Arabs living in major cities throughout England and Wales (2011 Census, Miladi, 2006:948), many SA Muslims have been brought up in the UK. This results in better English language skills, higher levels of British-standard education and more familiarity with British culture than newer Middle Eastern diasporic communities. Consequently, there is a growing number of young SA Muslims who are well educated professionals working particularly in law, medicine, accountancy and business (Hinnells, 2000:86).

Despite these growing numbers of acclimatised British-born Muslims, Muslim diasporas are still treated with suspicion by white Brits due to what is perceived as a reluctance to embrace British culture and their strong connection to the cultures of their religion and homelands. This has only heightened since the 9/11 attacks in New York, the 7/7 bombings and the various terrorist attacks throughout Europe which were carried out by Islamic extremists. The connection between terror and practicing the Islamic religion has thus “give(n) rise to the essentialist views of this faith and its followers as fundamentalist, pro-violence, uncompromising and anti-Western” (Küçükcan, 2004:254). It is within this context of Islamophobia, suspicion and culture clashes that the construction of Muslim diasporas within the Brexit campaigns will first be analysed in this chapter. After analysing how Muslims are constructed as monolithically undesirable, non-British ‘Others’ and as dangerous, potential terrorists, this chapter will then shift focus to look at Muslim engagement in the Brexit campaigns.

## **2.2) The Construction of the Syrian Terrorist**

One of the most prominent slogans in the VL campaign was “take back control of our borders” - a notion promoted as a key benefit to leaving the EU and which gained traction due to the fear surrounding the risk of terrorists entering the UK. The attacks carried out in Europe over the past decade by terrorists travelling through the Schengen Area have led to an increase in EU border control and security. However, the influx of (majority Muslim) refugees into Europe during the 2015 Syrian refugee crisis raised the question of whether this relaxed attitude towards migration would make it easier for terrorists to enter the EU and UK. The VL camp utilised this fear, making it central to the campaign. In the official VL leaflet, a whole page is dedicated to this notion of “Let’s take back control of our borders”, with a list of border control issues under this heading (Image 1). The last issue on this

list claims that the “the EU Court also stops us from deporting dangerous terror suspects” – a blatant oversimplification which connects EU membership with the increasing risk of terrorism.

Image 1:

Let's take back control of our borders

- A quarter of a million EU migrants come here every year – a city the size of Newcastle
- This puts a big strain on public services like the NHS and schools
- The EU Court means we can't stop violent convicted criminals coming here from Europe
- The EU Court also stops us from deporting dangerous terror suspects



*We need to take back control of our borders so we decide who can come here – and who can't*

[www.voteleavetakecontrol.org](http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org)  Vote Leave

On the following page, a photo of refugees, marked as Muslim by the woman's hijab, are shown illegally entering a country by slipping under a barbed wire fence (Image 2). Although this photo was not taken in the UK, the image forces the reader to implicitly connect these, presumably Syrian, Muslim refugees with the previous page's issue of border control and increased terror threat. This link becomes even more explicit considering the page's heading which claims that “We can't take the risk of voting to stay”, followed by a quote from the former head of Interpol, stating that “Europe's open-border arrangement...is effectively an international passport-free zone for terrorists”. The leaflet thus combines the image of illegal Muslim refugees with emotive words about terrorist threats, lack of border security and risks to British society, playing on the fears already rampant within the UK that Islam and its followers are “aggressors towards western civilisation” (Sarwar, 2016). As Virdee argues, this narrative suggests that by “exiting the EU we could also restrict the entry of such “undesirables” and make Britain safe again” (2017:5)

Image 2:

We can't take the risk of voting to stay

- The euro is permanently on the brink of crisis – and we will be forced to pay to bail it out **again**
- The EU's migrant crisis is out of control
- EU Judges are using the Charter of Fundamental Rights to take away more power from our police and security services
- The former head of Interpol, Ronald K Noble, has said that: *“Europe's open-border arrangement... is effectively an international passport-free zone for terrorists” and that it was like “hanging a sign welcoming terrorists to Europe”*



*Voting to stay in the EU is a threat to our jobs and our security*

[www.voteleavetakecontrol.org](http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org)  Vote Leave

While this implication of the Syrian refugee as a potential Islamic terrorist is not an explicit construction of members of the Syrian diaspora within the UK, it undoubtedly suggests the potential for every Syrian and Muslim, who has recently entered the UK to pose a threat to the safety of British citizens. This sentiment of the Muslim terrorist ‘other’ is reinforced when this photo reemerges later in the leaflet, uncropped, and showing a queue of Muslim refugees waiting on the other side of the barbed wire fence to cross the border (image 3). The increased number of refugees is significant here, as it increases the implied threat perpetrated through the image – it is not simply one family of refugees entering the UK, but a whole network of potential terrorists. The photo’s caption states “nearly 2 million people came to the UK from the EU over the last ten years. Imagine what it will be like in future decades when new, poorer countries join”. This once again highlights the undesirability of this diaspora within the UK by reinforcing the idea that EU membership is responsible for the influx of Muslim migrants, who bring with them poverty and the threat of terrorism.

Image 3:



A very similar discourse was propagated through one of the posters from UKIP’s sister campaign, Leave.EU. The poster, unveiled by Nigel Farage, shows a never-ending stream of dark skinned refugees with the words “Breaking point. The EU has failed us all” (image 4). Although this photo was most likely taken in the Middle East, it has once again been used to imply that the influx of Syrian and other refugees into Europe is ‘breaking’ the UK. The blurred faces of hundreds of refugees deindividualizes and dehumanises them, creating a homogenous mass of undesirable people, whose foreign culture, religion and skin colour marks them as distinctly separate from British values and culture. The connotations of ‘breaking’ only furthers this notion, suggesting that this mass of Muslim refugees is not just antithetical to British culture, but is also directly responsible for destroying it.

Importantly, most of the refugees in this photo are male, evoking images of dark-skinned male Muslim terrorists from the media coverage on recent terrorist attacks, and thus inciting a greater fear in the viewer than a more empathy-inducing female figure could create. Their overwhelming maleness and walking formation is reminiscent of an army marching into new land, suggesting that these refugees are metaphorically and literally invading the UK with their foreignness, desperation and poverty, while the refugees already living in the UK are simply waiting for reinforcements. Interestingly, unlike the image from the VL leaflet, there is very little which marks these refugees as Muslim, although the sentiment is certainly implied through their probable Syrian nationality; in this instance, their skin colour and foreignness are enough to mark them as a danger to British society.

Image 4:



### **2.3) The Construction of the Undesirable Turkish**

Another tactic used by VL which draws upon and incites Islamophobia and racial prejudice was the focus on the possibility of Turkey being admitted to the EU. The campaign video 'Paving the road from Ankara' (20/05/2016) on the VL YouTube channel, claims that "we are giving £2 billion to Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, Montenegro and Turkey...to join the EU". The map of Europe shown simultaneously with the statement highlights all five countries, along with Syria and Iraq in red and dark orange (Image 5). The colours of danger and warning unite these countries and imply that Turkey's EU accession will connect the UK with the dangerous and predominantly Muslim Syrians and Iraqis.

Image 5:



The dangerous nature of these nations is not only highlighted through the choice of colours, but also through a short clip of footage from the Turkish parliament in May 2016 which shows the parliament in absolute disarray while the MPs physically fight (Image 6). The suggestion here is that the uncivilised, animalistic, and almost barbaric nature of Turkish, and other Middle Eastern politics is forcing the UK to also lose control – the only way to supposedly avoid this and ‘take back’ control is by leaving the EU and unaffiliating themselves with these governments.

Image 6:



This message reoccurs in the images shared on the VL Facebook page and in another video ('Win £50 million with Kevin and Gary!', 31/05/2016). The image portrays a white woman with her head in her hands, clearly in despair, with the message "Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey are



joining the EU. Seriously.” (image 7). The disbelief and sadness felt at uniting the UK with Turkey is evident and emits a very clear anti-Turkey and anti-Middle-Eastern sentiment.

Image 7:



The video, meanwhile, presents Kevin and Gary, two white British men with stereotypically working-class names, behaviours and jobs (as seen in their work uniforms, accents and trip to the local pub) who are discussing whether Turkey or Albania will win a football game. Gary states that both countries are joining the EU but believes Turkey will win as they have a population of 76 million. Although the anti-Turkish sentiments are less pronounced in this video, Turkey’s undesirability as a fellow EU country is emphasized and the sheer numbers of Muslims who could potentially enter the UK are again presented as a reason to leave the EU. This narrative acquired traction and gained appeal with voters, especially appealing to the working class audience, because, as Virdee puts it, it “dovetailed so neatly with long-standing repertoires of negatively evaluated representations accompanying the on-going racialization of the figure of the Muslim” (2017:6).

In a similar way to the representation of the Syrian refugees, although this construction of Turkey does not directly correlate to the Turkish diaspora within the UK, it nevertheless represents their culture, values and religion as undesirable and irreconcilable with British ways of life. Moreover, by connecting Turkish identity with that of Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Iraq and Syria, the campaign homogenises these various nationalities. The fact that Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania have sizeable, and sometimes majority, Orthodox Christian populations is irrelevant, as the campaign instead suggests that these countries are all united by the way in which their (sometimes minority) Muslim values stand in opposition to British values. As such, the Turkish diaspora in the UK (and indeed any smaller Serbian and Albanian diasporas) become tarnished with the same Islamophobic brush which painted the Syrians as potential Islamic terrorists disrupting British society. The image of the

Turkish Muslim diaspora thus also becomes intertwined with that of the Syrian Muslim diaspora and the middle eastern Muslim becomes a figure of mistrust, danger and undesirability.

#### **2.4) The Invisible South Asian Muslim**

While the image of the Turkish and Syrian Muslim and their respective diasporas are constructed as potential terrorists, the SA Muslim, who constitutes the largest Muslim diaspora within the UK, is notably underrepresented in the VL campaign materials. In fact, none of the individuals in the campaign videos on the VL YouTube channel have SA and/or Muslim heritage, despite SA Muslims representing approximately 4% of the British population (2011 Census). Similarly, of the 279 images shared on the timeline of the official VL Facebook campaign, only 6 of them show individuals who could potentially belong to the SA Muslim diaspora. Of these 6 images, 5 of them are photo collages of campaign volunteers, thus reducing the construction of the SA Muslim to a small photo of one or two individuals, among many more white individuals (image 8).

Image 8:



This lack of SA Muslim representation reveals several things. Firstly, by only choosing to negatively represent Muslims who live outside the UK and from nations with very small diasporic communities within the UK (and thus small levels of political power and minimal voting rights), the VL campaign minimises the risk of isolating SA British Muslims. By only portraying Syrian and Turkish Muslims as potential terrorists, the campaign is less likely to lose support from the SA Muslim diasporas, who collectively have a relatively strong voting voice. Secondly, it encourages the public to conflate the SA Muslim with the Middle-Eastern terrorist other, as there is no directly positive construction of the SA Muslim to oppose the assumption of the dangerous Muslim figure. Thirdly, by reducing the ethnic

diversity and number of Muslim individuals published in the campaign, VL succeeds in presenting the UK as having a principally white society. This rather utopian image conforms with their general anti-Muslim sub-sentiments and the racism-inciting agenda to appeal to those voters who would choose to vote to leave the EU to reduce immigration and maintain an ethnically white Britain.

However, this lack of Muslim representation is a tendency also seen in the Remain campaign. Of the 66 videos in the 'Britain Stronger in Europe' campaign videos on the Open Britain (OB) YouTube channel, only one of them presents a vocal, everyday (non-politician) member of the Muslim diaspora; 17-year-old Shralifa explains why she believes Britain should stay in the EU in the 'Vote Remain for their Future' video (21/06/2016). Her ten second segment, in which she talks about the importance of staying united in the face of those who "wish to divide us", is the only time the opinion of an average, openly Muslim individual is shown (image 9). Crucially, she is under the voting age of 18 and her message, although clear and concise, is mitigated and undermined by her youth, inexperience and lack of political power. The video construction of the SA Muslim diaspora thus becomes overwhelmed by the voices of white Brits and is presented as marginal and unimportant.

Image 9:



Vote remain for their future

The OB Facebook page also has limited SA Muslim diasporic representation with only 16 images showing individuals of presumable SA Muslim heritage, equating to only 7% of the 227 images. In a similar way to the VL campaign, most of these images are collages containing photos of campaigners throughout the country, meaning that the Muslim individual is often represented as a token ethnic minority among a sea of white Brits. However, the OB campaign includes definitively more Muslim individuals in these collages than the opposition campaign. Moreover, 2 of these 16 photos exclusively show members of the SA Muslim diasporas. The first presents a young Muslim woman with two males,

all of whom are holding “I’m in” posters and smiling (image 10). The background of the photo is unmistakably British with red brick houses, lampposts and umbrellas to protect them from the grey English weather – situationally contextualising these individuals as Brits. Yet despite this undoubtedly Britishness of these young individuals, one of the comments on the photo questions “are these students actually British?”, reflecting the Islamophobic undercurrent of opposition which the Leave campaign attempted to harness.

Image 10:



The second all-Muslim picture shows the same three diasporic individuals holding the posters in what appears to be their corner shop (image 11). This common trope of the local corner shop being run by a SA Muslim family is a picture which many British people would recognise from their own towns and which marks these Muslim individuals as integrated cornerstones of the local community. By selecting an image which constructs Muslims from average socio-economic backgrounds in an overtly stereotypical environment, the Remain campaign normalises the Muslim figure. However, it also simultaneously reinforces potentially harmful and prejudiced stereotypes about the position of Muslims in British society. This has a two-fold effect, insofar as the averageness of these individuals constructs a sympathetic image which is more likely to appeal to a wider audience of both fellow Muslim voters who recognise similarities between themselves and these individuals, and to white British voters who recognise these people as symbolic members of their local communities. Conversely by conforming to the socio-economic stereotype, rather than portraying Muslims as lawyers, businessmen or creative entrepreneurs, the campaign reinforces the idea that members of the SA Muslim diasporas generally “have little education and lack sophisticated intellectual tools” (Brown, 2006:109). This view is reflected in one of the photo comments which states “I’m in...The U.K. And now claiming benefits” – a comment founded on the widespread, yet misconceived notion that

Muslim migrants are uneducated and lazy so come to the UK to claim state aid and avoid having to work.

Image 11:



## **2.5) South Asian Muslim Political Engagement**

Although only one of the OB YouTube videos portrays an everyday Muslim, there are two videos which present a practicing, SA Muslim politician – Sadiq Khan, Labour Party MP and Mayor of London. Both videos ('Sadiq Khan & David Cameron on Brexit', 30/05/2016 and 'Get the Facts about Europe', 16/06/2016) show clips of Khan giving motivational speeches and presenting facts to Remain campaigners. The fact that such a prominent and popular Muslim political figure was so openly campaigning to remain in the EU would not have gone unnoticed among other Muslim voters. In fact, by being so openly involved in the campaign, Khan demonstrates that the EU referendum is a topic which effects the SA Muslim diaspora. He reinforces this in his speech to the ethnically diverse group of campaigners by emphasizing that it is diseases such as Parkinson's and breast cancer, and problems such as unemployment and lack of opportunities that can be tackled if the UK remains in the EU (30/05/2016). By focussing on issues which effect every single British citizen, regardless of ethnicity or cultural heritage, Khan highlights the universal necessity of becoming politically engaged with the referendum and places the importance of the Muslim diaspora vote on par with that of ethnically white Brits. His involvement also promotes ethnic diversity and tolerance – both qualities which the UK and the EU promote as key foundation cornerstones of a neoliberal Western society.

Another way in which these qualities are promoted is through volunteer photos shared on Facebook. Unlike the VL campaign, the collage images of campaign volunteers on the official OB Facebook page, consistently show individuals from a range of diverse ethnic backgrounds and skin colours. Although it is somewhat difficult to determine the religion of every volunteer, an average viewer would be able to recognise the SA heritage of some volunteers and consequently assume that this campaign is supported by several Muslims. While this tactic is extremely strategic in garnering new support by implying the wide-spread support of the campaign among many different nationalities, it also indicates how some members of the SA Muslim diaspora were actively engaged in promoting the Remain campaign.

However, these collages were compiled with a specific campaign goal; namely to combat the racist undertones of VL and appeal to the masses. As such, the extent to which these images reflect true levels of Muslim diasporic involvement is unclear. The same can be said of the lack of SA Muslim volunteers in the VL volunteer photos. On the one hand, a lack of photographic evidence could suggest the lack of SA Muslim political engagement in the campaign. Yet, on the other hand, it cannot be assumed that the lack of Muslim volunteers is an accurate reflection of Muslim political engagement, as the campaign organisers could have compiled and selected certain images to promote a predominantly ethnically white view of the UK, and appeal to white British voters.

To analyse Muslim diasporic engagement in the campaigns, it is therefore useful to examine any political involvement and campaigning initiated by the SA Muslim diasporas themselves, rather than constructed by white British campaigners. The Muslim Association of Britain, a political group promoting Muslim participation in Britain, released a press statement just weeks before the referendum claiming that it “backs vote to remain in EU” (07/06/2016). The statement begins by emphasizing the benefits that EU membership brings to the UK – environmental, legal and personal security, as well as job benefits, employment opportunities and the EU market. In doing so, it clearly acknowledges the Muslim diaspora as British citizens who benefit from the same advantages as white Brits. The statement then claims that there is a “disturbing rise of xenophobia and Islamophobia in our society” and that an “exit from the EU runs the risk of perpetuating rifts in British society, which would increase levels of hate crimes against British Muslims”. This shift towards Muslim-specific issues not only suggests that the Muslim diaspora should have their own, exclusive reasons for political engagement, but should also combine these reasons with their responsibilities as British citizens. It is also a subtle dismissal of the Leave campaign’s perpetuation of these rifts between white Brits and Muslims through their negative Muslim representation.

While support for Remain may seem logical for the Muslim diasporas considering the xenophobia in VL, this was not necessarily the case. On the ‘outreach’ page of the VL website, a link for the ‘Muslims

for Britain' webpage is listed – a page purposefully established to support the VL campaign. Unlike the statement from the Muslim Association of Britain, Muslims for Britain's statement begins by listing reasons to leave the EU which directly relate to the Muslim diaspora. The statement claims that "by leaving the European Union, Britain would be free to make its own free trade deals with commonwealth countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and India". Interestingly, only Muslims of SA heritage are targeted here, who, unlike the Turkish and Syrian Muslims, were not presented quite so negatively in the Leave campaign. The 'Bangladesh for Britain' website, which was also linked to the VL outreach page, uses a similar diasporic-specific rhetoric. Their statement claims that "many Bangladeshi immigrants find it difficult to obtain a visa and many are sent home after a period of time because of changes to skilled workers visas" and that "Commonwealth and all non-EU immigrants are discriminated against in favour of EU immigrants". By selecting issues directly impacting the relevant diasporas, both pages are attempting to encourage engagement with British politics with an Islamic focus, promoting policies which will have the best possible outcome for SA Muslims rather than for the British population. This philosophy only strengthens the divides between Muslim diasporas and white Brits by emphasizing the different needs of the two groups and promoting a lack of unity.

Although these websites demonstrate that the SA Muslim diaspora was actively engaged in political campaigning to some extent, what they do not illuminate is the impact that this engagement had on the average, everyday Muslim voter. The Muslim Association of Britain for example, despite having over 7000 'likes' on their Facebook page, may have remained relatively unknown and uninfluential in swaying the political votes of the Muslim diaspora. Similarly, although the 'Muslims for Britain' Facebook page has 162 'likes', it does not mean that their political sentiments were not shared by a greater majority. However, a post-referendum Lord Ashcroft Poll, while unable to demonstrate the exact involvement of British Muslims in voting in the referendum, or to gauge the political engagement in the campaigns, nevertheless provides an indication of the general voting tendencies among the Muslim diasporas in the UK. Of the 201 Muslims surveyed in the poll, 70% of them voted to remain in the EU, with 30% voting to leave.

Although the poll is slightly unrepresentative as only 12369 people were surveyed, and of those people only 2% identified as Muslim (under half of the figure indicated by the 2011 national census which indicated that 4.8% of the population identify as Muslim), it nevertheless leads to two rather tentative conclusions; firstly, the Islamophobic undertones of the Leave campaign may have persuaded the Muslim diaspora to vote to remain in the EU, and secondly, the discrepancies between the percentage of Muslim voters in the poll and the percentage of Muslims in the UK suggest that many Muslims may not have voted in the referendum and were not actively engaged in this element of British politics.

## **2.6) Concluding remarks**

Despite the distinctions between the Muslim diasporas in the UK, the construction of these groups in the VL campaign materials tends to be rather monolithic insofar as the Syrian, Turkish and other Middle-Eastern Muslims are all presented as potentially dangerous terrorists, who threaten the wealth, security and culture of British society. The lack of voting rights held by recent Syrian and Turkish immigrants to the UK, means that this negative representation of these diasporas did not have far-reaching consequences on the overall outcome of the referendum, as the very people who were so negatively portrayed in the campaigns often could not vote. Meanwhile, the SA British Muslim is notably underrepresented in the Leave campaign, thus marginalising the SA Muslim voice and potentially isolating the Muslim voter, while simultaneously encouraging the conflation of the SA Muslim with the Middle-Eastern Muslim. The non-recognition of Muslim influence in British society by VL presents the UK as a predominantly white, binarised society in which the white Brit symbolizes true British values, and the Middle-Eastern Muslim acts as the antithesis and threat to this. This underrepresentation of Muslim diasporas in the Leave campaign also occurs in the Remain campaign, but further extends to include Middle Eastern Muslims too, echoing the necessity to appeal to white voters. However, when SA Muslims *are* constructed in the Remain campaign, they tend to be portrayed as well integrated, if somewhat stereotypical, members of the community with low socio-economic statuses and power.

These two differing approaches to Muslim representation is reflected in the engagement of the Muslim diaspora in the campaigns and referendum. Although not a direct causal link, VL's rather negative and monolithic stance on Muslims as foreign and dangerous 'others' undoubtedly had some impact on Muslim support, and this is evidenced in the lack of Muslim campaigns and Muslim votes to leave the EU. Conversely, the approach of the Remain campaign to present members of the Muslim diasporas as integrated British citizens, and not emphasize their differences, resulted in more support for this campaign from these communities. As such, it would not be illogical to conclude that the engagement of the Muslim diaspora in national politics appears to be somewhat influenced by their representations in the political campaigns and the extent to which these campaigns construct them as valid members of British society who have important political voices and power.



### **3) South Asian Diasporas**

#### **3.1) Introduction to the South Asian Diasporas**

Geopolitically, SA refers to the nations of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Tibet and Sri Lanka (Desai, 2004:4) with most of the SA population in Britain falling into four approximate categories; the Bangladeshis, Pakistani Punjabis, Sikh Punjabis and the Gujaratis (Sharma, 2014:119) and 45% of Indians identifying as Hindus, and 27% as Sikhs (Sharma, 2014:122). The history of the Punjabi and Gujarati diasporas within the UK begins much the same way as the Muslim SA diasporas, insofar as Indians began migrating to the UK in the mid-1800s (Hinnels, 2000:78), with the majority arriving from India in the 1950s-60s following the post-WWII labour shortage (Hinnels, 2000:79).

Gendered migration also followed a similar pattern to that of the SA Muslims with the predominantly young, uneducated and poor males from rural backgrounds arriving first, then followed by their wives and families once the males could provide financial support (Brown, 2006:44, Hinnels, 2000:86). However, the migration pattern of Hindu and Sikh SAs differed from that of Muslim SAs. Many of the migrants arriving in the 1950s were so-called 'twice migrants' who were former indentured labourers arriving from Africa and the Caribbean (Cohen, 2008:61). Although many of these migrants originally came from poor, rural backgrounds and worked in agriculture in their indentured homelands, it was common for them to have transitioned into government employment, the civil service, trade or private services after completing their indentured labour contracts (Brown, 2006:38).

The majority of these 'twice migrants' thus arrived with a strong skill-set, including professional experience and strong English language capabilities. They were already familiar with migration processes, having previously undergone cultural adaptation processes and were therefore "well aware of the benefits to be gained from developing alternative institutional arrangements of their own" (Ballard, 2000:134). The children of these East African Indian migrants were familiar with British-governed education systems and had been brought up in a culture committed to personal and educational advancement (Ballard, 2000:134). Moreover, Sikh and Hindu women joined their husbands much earlier than Muslim wives did (Hinnels, 2000:80). Community development within the diaspora thus occurred much faster as the newly-arrived women began running temples, organised worship groups and maintained familial and kinship networks (Hinnels, 2000:98).

A combination of these two factors meant that many SA Hindus and Sikhs arrived in the UK with an improved socio-economic position, more financial support, and relevant skills to begin life in a new country. This enabled them to adapt and settle much faster than their Muslim counterparts, whose families tended to arrive much later, with fewer transferable skills and less experience of resettlement. Subsequently, Indians have generally "prospered the most" out of all the diasporic communities

(Brown, 2006:69), regardless of whether they were direct or twice migrants. East-African-Asians and Indians, for example, have the highest proportion of children entering professional careers as lawyers, doctors or accountants (Hinnels, 2000:86). In fact, 30% of young British Hindus hold a university degree, and 5% of Hindus overall are doctors (Jaffrelot, 2007:287). Sikhs have enjoyed similar levels of improved socio-economic mobility, with virtually all Sikh families being categorised as “broadly middle class”, having moved out of small, run-down inner-city houses and now living in suburban properties (Ballard, 2000:135).

With a marked increase in socio-economic status and higher levels of social integration into mainstream British culture than their SA Muslim counterparts (Sharma, 2014:128), it only follows that the SA Hindu and Sikh diasporas are also more involved in British politics. This is evidenced, by the 50 ethnically Indian candidates who competed in the 2015 general elections, as well as the 12, non-Muslim Indian MPs who were voted in in 2017 (Sharma, 2014:127). However, to what extent were prominent SA politicians engaged in the Brexit campaigns, and how were they, and other members of the Indian diaspora constructed in the campaigns themselves?

### **3.2) The Construction of the Integrated Indian**

The constructions of members of the SA diaspora in the campaign videos on the OB YouTube channel are completely unremarkable and distinctly average – with Indians almost exclusively portrayed as everyday members of the British work force. In ‘Jobs and the EU Referendum (02/04/2016), for example, an Indian-heritage young woman is shown in professional attire, intensely discussing what is presumed to be work-place concerns in an office setting (Image 12). Her status as a working woman reflects the increasing norm among British Hindus and Sikhs for females to leave the realm of the domestic to earn money and begin careers, echoing Brown’s claim that “Hindus and Sikhs are much more accepting of women working in a range of paid employment” than their Muslim SA counterparts (2006:71). Similarly, in ‘Get the Facts about Europe’ (14/01/2016), another young SA Brit is shown working in a call centre. These two representations of young SA professionals suggest that SA diasporic members are thoroughly integrated into British society and the work place, working white-collar professions alongside white ethnic Brits.

Image 12:



In support of this sentiment, a SA man is pictured at work in another video entitled 'Get the Facts about Europe' (03/03/2016), wearing a high-vis jacket and signalling to a co-worker. Although his outfit and surroundings label him a blue-collar worker, he is shown physically contributing to the British economy and labour market. The well-integrated nature of the SA diaspora is also presented on a personal level too. In 'Brexit and the EU: the 6 Key Facts you need to know' (24/05/2016) an Asian student is pictured laughing and joking in an ethnically diverse group of fellow student friends. His religious and ethnic heritage are of no importance as the scene makes it clear that he is a well-liked and accepted member of the predominantly white group (Image 13).

Image 13:



Throughout the campaign materials, members of the SA diasporas are repeatedly, and almost exclusively, constructed as minorities working and living among white Brits. Their diasporic, communal

nature is only hinted at once in the campaign videos during a scene in which a SA doctor is shown treating a young Indian boy who is accompanied by his father ('What does the EU referendum mean for Sam's future?', 24/05/2016). This is the only instance in which multiple people of Indian heritage are shown in the same clip, referring to the areas in the UK in which the SA population is substantive enough that a professional member of the Indian diasporic community could encounter fellow community members while at work (Image 14).

Image 14:



What does the EU referendum mean for Sam's future?

Aside from playing up to the stereotype of the Indian doctor, the professional aspect of this scene is important insofar as this cluster of SAs is presented as occurring only in a professional, public setting rather than on a personal, private level. By confining this inter-diasporic interaction to the professional realm, OB refrains from presenting the strong community aspect of the SA diasporas – instead emphasizing their professional and social integration. On the one hand this serves to positively eliminate the outsider status of the SA diasporas by presenting them as no different from average white Brits. Yet on the other hand, this approach ignores the cultural differences between the SA diasporas and white British society to such an extent that 'multiculturality' is reduced to homogeneity and the unique characteristics of these diasporic communities are undermined.

Despite this overall positive image of the well-integrated, hard-working SA Brit who contributes to British society, the SA diasporas are nonetheless constructed in a slightly marginalised manner, insofar as not a single member of these diasporas are given a voice in these Remain videos. Unlike the numerous white Brits who share their views on why they want the UK to stay in the EU or who feature as the main 'characters' in campaign storylines, the British SAs remain on the side-lines of the campaign materials. While they are of course an ethnic minority in the UK, and are arguably

represented proportionally as such, their lack of voice proves demeaning; presenting them as having no real opinion about the upcoming referendum worthy of being published in any official capacity.

This side-lining of the SA diasporic view also occurs in the Remain campaign material published on the official OB Facebook page. Of the 15 images featuring brown-skinned individuals of presumable SA heritage, none of them present the SA diaspora member as an individual with an opinion. Instead, they are all de-individualised through their depiction as one of numerous campaigners or voters (image 15). In fact, the only SA individual given any prominence is Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi (image 16). Although this image has been included in the campaign to directly connect with and appeal to the Indian diasporic voters in the UK, it also serves to highlight just how the opinion of a non-British SA is deemed more worthy and important than that of a UK-residing member of the SA diaspora.

Image 15:



Image 16:



SA diasporic members are further de-individualised and marginalised through their rather homogeneous representation. Unlike members of the Muslim diasporas who tend to be quite overtly represented as Muslim and are thus easily recognised as such through their clothing and the context

in which they are shown, the campaign neglects to mark the Hindus and Sikhs as overtly. Consequently, the many differences which exist among the various SA diasporic groups are reduced and the SA Hindus, Sikhs and Christians, whose cultural heritage is just as diverse as their religious orientation, are presented as one and the same in the Remain campaign videos and images.

### **3.3) Leaving out in the Leave campaign**

Although the construction of members of the SA diasporas may be somewhat homogenous and silent in the Remain campaign, the fact that they are presented in the campaigns at all must not be overlooked – particularly as there is almost no SA representation in the VL campaigns. The only images which feature members of the SA diaspora are the five collages on the official VL Facebook page which spotlight the campaigners, showing gratitude for their efforts. In each of these photos, only one individual of SA roots is shown, and their cultural and religious heritage remains unmarked (image 17). The remaining 274 images on the page refrain from any form of photographic or written acknowledgement that these diasporic groups constitute an important part of the UK population.

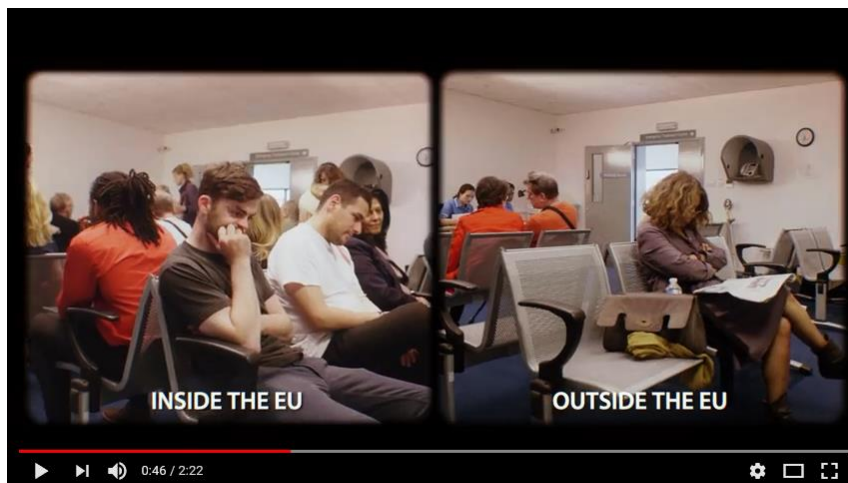
Image 17:



 [voteleavetakecontrol.org](http://voteleavetakecontrol.org)

This non-representation continues in the YouTube videos, with only one video, 'Which NHS will you vote for?' (23/05/2016) featuring an individual with SA background. The Indian woman appears extremely briefly as a sick patient waiting to be seen by a doctor in A&E (Image 18). She appears for no more than one second in the background of a close-up shot of a white male. Interestingly, in the parallel video which imagines the same, much less crowded, hospital waiting room in a post-Brexit reality, the woman is not shown, suggesting here that there is no place for sick and elderly Indian women in the UK once it has left the EU. As such, the only representation of the SA diasporas in the video campaigns both physically and metaphorically side-lines their role in British society; not only are they practically non-existent within the UK, but those who do live here are presented as undesirable, sickly members of society who drain the NHS of its resources.

Image 18:



Which NHS will you vote for?

The lack of SA representation in the Leave campaign is however equally as interesting to analyse as concrete representation. As argued in the previous chapter, by not featuring many SA individuals in the visual campaign materials, VL constructs a predominantly white utopian version of the UK. This construction of an all-white Britain is not only presented as a possible future should the UK leave the EU but is also intrinsically connected to Britain's imperial past. When paired with images of ethnically white Brits, the central slogan of the VL campaign "Let's take back control" emphasises the need to reinstate the sovereign will of the white British population (Virdee, 2017:3). By claiming that control has been lost since joining the EU regionalist initiative and becoming reliant on external laws, power politics, and the EU's neoliberal values, the slogan ignites a desire to return to the period in which the UK's global status and economic power was sourced internally; power achieved not through the multicultural approach propagated by the EU, but from an insular, nationalist approach which proves the UK's strength as an independent sovereign nation.

This notion of restoring Britain to its global position of *primus inter pares* incites nostalgia for the time of the British empire, during which white Britishness reigned supreme, both economically and culturally, over colonial societies (Virdee, 2017:1). This subtle narrative of imperial longing becomes even more marked in the campaigns when one considers that it is the SA diasporas, the direct descendants of colonialism, who are shunned from this image of white Britain. Thus, by not representing members of the SA diasporas, the VL campaign appeals to those who desire a return to white British greatness as "the global hegemon of the capitalist world economy" (Virdee, 2017:4), regardless of the racist underbelly which accompanies this cultural and racial superiority.

This sentiment is not just propagated in the Leave campaign through the process of side-lining SAs, but also through some of the content of the YouTube videos. 'Heroes' (17/12/2015) for example, lists

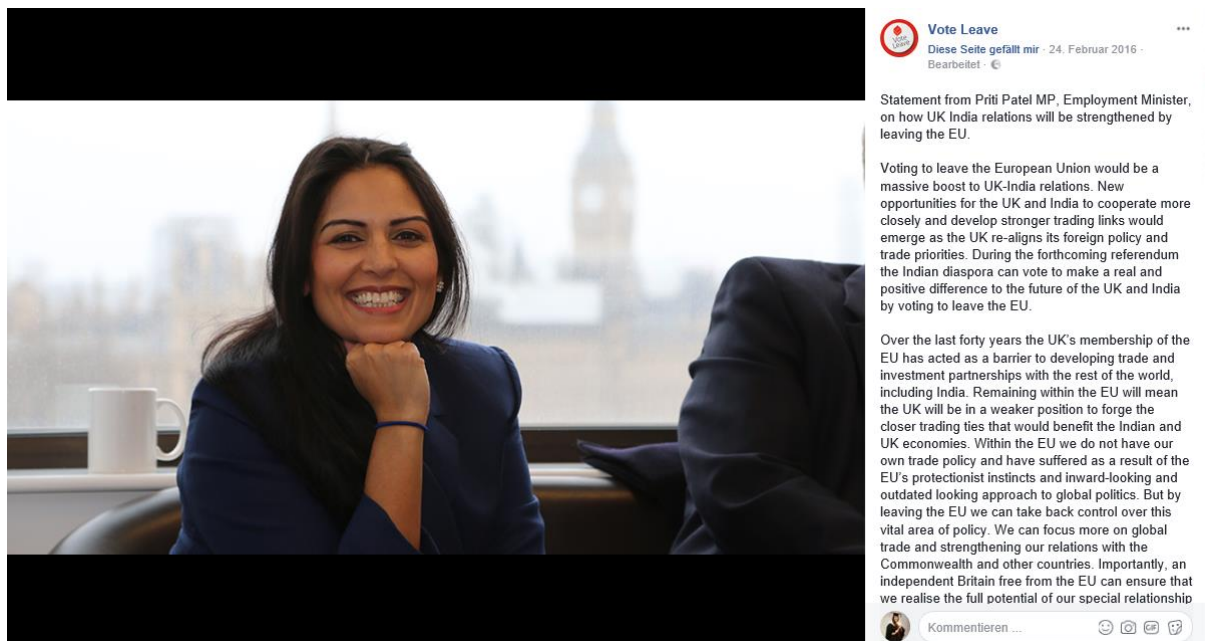
ten historical and influential British figure, including Newton, Nelson, Pankhurst, Darwin, and Churchill. Of the ten figures, all but one was from Britain’s colonial era, with several of them (most notably Darwin and Churchill) known for their controversial racist views. By only mentioning figures and their achievements from a time in which the global status of the UK was at its most powerful, the VL campaign adds to this nostalgia and longing for the imperial decades, suggesting that notable global achievements only occur during time of white British superiority.

The video furthers this sentiment by concluding that “These British heroes changed the world. Don’t believe those who talk Britain down, who say we’re too weak to control our own affairs”. By regurgitating the notion that being in control of British affairs can only occur if the UK regains its sovereignty and former status as colonial power, the Leave campaign subtly undermines the non-white, SA members of British society and attempts to reinstate their colonial status as minority subjects – stripping them of their political and social power in modern-day Britain.

### **3.4) The Engagement of South Asian Political Figures**

Although the average SA individual is not constructed in the Leave campaigns, that is not to say that politicians with SA heritage were not engaged with the campaign. Priti Patel, a Hindu MP and member of the Conservative Party with Ugandan-Gujarati heritage, was highly active; founding the ‘Women for Britain’ campaign for females opposed to staying in the EU, and often cited as the VL poster-girl. She features on the VL Facebook page (image 19) with an accompanying statement directly tailored and addressed to SA diasporic members.

Image 19:





She begins her statement claiming that “the Indian diaspora can vote to make a real and positive difference to the future of the UK and India by voting to leave the EU”, and then emphasizes how leaving the EU will allow the UK to bolster trade links with the growing Indian economy. She next lists the advantages that Brexit would bring to the immigration system by allowing the “brightest and the best in from around the world”, adding that “because we are unable to restrict migration from the EU, immigrants from non-EU countries have faced more restrictions...I know that many members of the Indian diaspora find it deeply unfair that other EU nations effectively get special treatment”.

By targeting this statement directly at the British-Indian diaspora, the factors which could influence SA voters’ behaviour are redefined; the implication that SA migration to the UK would be easier if the UK were to leave the EU is positioned as a factor which would influence SA voters, as they would vote to leave the EU to strengthen their personal and professional ties with their heritage country, rather than for reasons directly relating to Britain’s prosperity and political sovereignty. The ethno-cultural heritage of the diasporic voters is thus presented as the most important influential factor in determining their votes, while the present-day nationality and national interests of these voters is barely acknowledged. This reflects the political pattern suggested by Conversi (2012:1358), who believes that nationalism, and by extension, political projects effecting the nation, are often perceived by the diasporic communities as opportunities to defend their communities. It is this concept of defending the Indian diasporas’ national interests which Patel attempts to tap into to garner Indian diasporic votes.

Despite the validity and appeal of Patel’s statement, by only concentrating on how leaving the EU could benefit the Indian diasporic community, Patel’s political engagement succeeds in widening the racial gulf prevalent throughout the campaign. By so clearly distinguishing SA priorities from white British priorities, VL isolates the SA diaspora from the concept of Britishness upon which the campaign so heavily relied. SA engagement with VL thus becomes estranged from the core sentiment of regaining British sovereignty and global power which was such a key mobilising factor among white British Leave voters. This only serves to reinforce the notion of racial, cultural and political difference between white and diasporic communities, further igniting the ever-prevalent racism and xenophobia intertwined in the Leave campaign which was targeted at the non-Britishness of these diasporic citizens.

Conversely, the approach adopted by high-profile SA political figures in the Remain campaign is consistent with the construction of the everyday SA individual in the campaign material, insofar as there is a recurring narrative of the fully integrated SA. Although most influential political figures highlighted in the YouTube videos are white Brits, Labour Party politician, Baroness Shami Chakrabarti, who was born to Bengali parents and raised Christian, features in one of the videos. While the lack of

engagement from SA politicians is important in reflecting a potential lack of political engagement among SA diasporas, this lonesome video nonetheless contributes to the overall construction of the SA diasporas. In 'What do experts think about Brexit' (08/06/2016), Chakrabarti stresses that the two World Wars occurred because of "excessive competition, rivalry and hate between nations" and that Europe needs "collaboration and cooperation" going forward (Image 20). Her emphasis on European history and the EU's future allows Chakrabarti to position herself not as a member of an ethnic minority and diasporic community, but as a British citizen who has a shared history and future with Europe.

Image 20:



Moreover, Chakrabarti's use of the ambiguous, collective pronoun 'we' aligns SAs with British *and* EU citizens. In doing so, Chakrabarti's political engagement with the Remain campaign transcends the typical construction of SA diasporic individuals as well-integrated British citizens, instead implying that they are members of a much larger regional community. The suggestion here is that despite the cultural and ethnic history and differences of the SA diasporas, they are also British and EU citizens, and should therefore vote in accordance with British and EU interests, rather than with purely diasporic interests in mind.

### **3.5) Concluding remarks**

The success of these differing approaches presented by political SA individuals can be measured, to some extent, by the engagement of the SA diaspora in the referendum. According to the post-referendum Lord Ashcroft Poll, 58 of the 83 Hindus poll-participants voted Remain in the EU, with half of the 20 Sikhs choosing to Remain. While the poll is certainly flawed with regards to its accurate representation and low number of participants, these figures are certainly indicative of general voting tendencies. In a similar pattern to Muslim voters, the Hindus' political engagement and their voting

habits stand in correlation to their representation in the campaigns; namely, the more frequently and positively British SA Hindus were constructed in the campaign, the more likely they were to vote for that outcome. As the Remain campaign featured more representation of SA diasporic members (albeit a somewhat homogenous and marginalised representation) Hindus were more likely to be able to identify and sympathise with the Remain campaign.

Conversely, the lack of SA construction, general sentiments of colonial nostalgia and the desire to return to wide-spread white British supremacy prevalent in the VL campaign resulted in limited support from this diasporic group. These figures also suggest that the Leave campaign's attempt at convincing SA Hindus to vote Leave by appealing to their status as a distinct community with separate political diasporic interests was less successful than the Remain campaign's approach of underlining their status as well-integrated British and EU citizens. This supports Sharma's claim that the modern-day diaspora, particularly the new generation, "perceive themselves as British and make political choices as per mainstream British population rather than having a narrow approach of thinking themselves as a diaspora community...unconnected from major national challenges and issues" (2014:127).

Interestingly, however, the Sikh diaspora appears to have had a split view. Despite the press release issued by the Sikh Council UK and the online campaign initiated by the Sikh Federation UK to persuade British Sikhs to vote Remain, approximately 50% of Sikh voters appear to have voted Leave. While the Lord Ashcroft poll is hugely unrepresentative of the actual number and orientation of Sikh diasporic votes, it appears that the votes of the Sikh diaspora were not as widely influenced by a lack of, or negative, Sikh construction in the campaigns, or by the lack of prominent Sikh politicians involved in either of the campaigns. A rather speculative reason for this could be the Sikhs' "insist[ence] on their distinction" and their acceptance of minority status both in their homeland of India and within the British SA diaspora (Cohen, 2008:65). Their lack of representation in political campaigns could therefore be an accepted norm within the community, due to their limited numbers. Moreover, their small diasporic community could also mean that their ties to India are much more prominent than that of the Hindu diaspora, of which many members have extended family throughout the UK and therefore do not need to rely on transnational connections. Consequently, VL's attempt at directly appealing to the needs of the diasporic community vis-à-vis easier family migration and improved business connections may have influenced Sikhs more strongly.

## **4) Eastern European Diasporas**

### **4.1) Introduction to the Eastern European Diasporas**

En-masse Eastern European (EE) migration to the UK is much more recent than that of the SA diasporas, peaking in 2004 when former Soviet Bloc countries, most notably Poland, Lithuania and Latvia joined the EU and the UK opened its labour market to A8 migrants (Drinkwater, 2010:74). Prior to this, the EE diaspora consisted of pre-WW2 political migrants fleeing persecution, and post-WW2 political, economic and labour migrants who were fleeing the Communist regime for survival or better economic prospects (Kusek and Kaplan, 2014:5). As such, the contemporary EE diasporas in the UK tend to be disjointed communities made up of migrants who have been settled in the UK for several decades, having arrived with the socio-economic disadvantage of political and economic baggage, and the more recent migrants, who have relocated to the UK for professional development and have little memory of their Communist heritage (Kusek and Kaplan, 2014:9).

This most recent EE migratory pattern has been described as the largest-ever wave of migration to the UK, (Drinkwater, 2010:73) with an increase of 631,000 Poles residing in the UK between 2004 and 2012 (Office of National Statistics). However, despite the significant proportion of professional EEs entering the country (approximately 10% of A8 migrant workers (Drinkwater, 2010:85)), members of EE diasporas tend to be categorized as labourers and depicted as “anything from a hard-working, well trained, ethical migrant[s] to one who abuses public assistance, takes employment from English people, and even commits crimes” (Kusek and Kaplan, 2014:72). This positions EE diasporas very differently than the diasporas previously discussed, as they are predominantly known for their position in the labour market rather than for their cultural differences and status as foreign, ‘unheimlich’ entities.

Their status as labourers is crucial in understanding the role of the EE diasporas in the EU referendum. One of the central questions which the referendum presented was whether the British public wanted to leave the EU’s sphere of free movement and trade. Voting Leave signified a desire to reduce the migration of European citizens to the UK and potentially complicate the resident status of the migrants already living in the country. As the largest group of European migrants, Polish and other EE labourers thus became the indirect targets of the consequences of voting Leave – targets which were only engorged by the widespread idea that these migrants were an “economic threat to the domestic working class” (Virdee, 2017:5) due to the cheap, and subsequently preferable, labour which they provide to British employers.

It thus seems logical that the Leave campaign would have fed into and propagated this idea, positioning the increasing numbers of EE labourers, and their negative effect on the job prospects of

British workers, as reasons to leave the EU and restrict incoming migration. However, while this negative discourse surrounding the EE labourer was certainly evident in the general narrative surrounding the campaign (as evidenced by the anti-Polish backlash and assault on Poles which occurred directly after the referendum results (Komaromi, 2016)) there are very few instances of such a direct, negative construction of this diaspora in the campaign material.

#### **4.2) The Construction of the Criminal Non-Labourer**

Although the migrants targeted in VL's anti-immigrant discourse tended to be non-European, Muslim others, European migrants were also negatively constructed. The VL leaflet, for example, claims that "a quarter of a million EU migrants come here every year – a city the size of Newcastle. This puts a big strain on public services like the NHS and schools" (image 21). Although the migrants are not specifically labelled EE, the suggestion here is that the recent, overwhelming influx of migrants (of which the majority originate from Poland and other EE countries) are a negative drain on the public resources which British tax payers' money are funding. The specific reference to the NHS, the pride and symbol of the British government's welfare system, implies the EE migrant is the cause of the recent NHS failings and its decrease in adequate facilities. The suggestion here is that the EE migrant therefore not only negatively impacts the British government's neo-liberal welfare state and public facilities, but also the health, education and prospects of the British public.

Image 21:



It is no coincidence that Newcastle was selected as a point of reference. As the largest city in the North East, Newcastle's reputation as a major British hub often disproportionately exceeds its status as a small-mid size town with a much smaller population than is often expected. Choosing a city located in the poorest region of the UK, which is well known for its strong working-class roots and distinct lack of ethnic diversity subtly connects EE immigration with poverty and low-skilled jobs, while simultaneously presenting the EE diaspora as a direct threat to the white, British working-class way-

of-life. This is an echo of the previously analysed video, 'Win £50 million with Kevin and Gary!', (31/05/2016) which also reveals similar sentiments.

The British working-class are particularly vulnerable to these implied threats, having already suffered downward mobility and political and social defeats since the 1980s. Delegitimised socialist policies, Thatcherism, the decline of Old Labour and the subsequent rise of New Labour and the austerity programmes introduced after 2008 (Virdee, 2017:9), all left the working class injured and resentful. This portrayal of the EU migrant as a direct threat to the privileges enjoyed by the working-class therefore frames the EE diasporas as scapegoats through which economic and social frustrations can be vented. The EE migrant thus becomes the target of the working class' "resentful English nationalism" (Virdee, 2017:9). While only around a quarter of Leave voters identified as being of the lowest two social classes (Ashcroft Polls 2016), this rhetoric regarding the EE diasporas as the working class' 'enemy within' nevertheless resonated with a category of working-class white Brits who felt as if an injustice had been served to them through recent neo-liberal, multicultural policies.

However, while the VL leaflet certainly implicates EE migrants as the main threat, it does not explicitly construct the Polish, Hungarian, Lithuanian or Latvian diasporas negatively. Similarly, although the accompanying assumption is that EU migrants are not only negatively impacting public services, but also the labour market, the campaign resists from engaging with this discourse and refuses to present members of these diasporas as predominantly labour migrants. Instead, the leaflet, and other campaign materials, focus on constructing the EU migrant as a criminal figure. The leaflet, on two separate pages, states "The EU court means we can't stop violent convicted criminals coming here from Europe. The EU court also stops us from deporting dangerous terror suspects" (image 21) and "EU judges are using the Charter of Fundamental Rights to take away more power from our police and security services" (image 22). The repeated references to EU criminality and British law and order positions the EE diasporas as potential criminals who are disrupting the safety and security of British society.

Image 22:

## We can't take the risk of voting to stay

- The euro is permanently on the brink of crisis – and we will be forced to pay to bail it out **again**
- The EU's migrant crisis is out of control
- EU Judges are using the Charter of Fundamental Rights to take away more power from our police and security services
- The former head of Interpol, Ronald K Noble, has said that:  
*"Europe's open-border arrangement... is effectively an international passport-free zone for terrorists" and that it was like "hanging a sign welcoming terrorists to Europe"*



*Voting to stay in the EU is a threat to our jobs and our security*

[www.voteleavetakecontrol.org](http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org)

 Vote Leave

This sentiment is continued in an image shared on the VL Facebook page of Theresa Rafacz, a Polish national, who “killed her husband by kicking and stamping on his head” (image 23). The image claims that EU law prevents this apparently dangerous woman from being removed from the UK, implying that EU membership increases the number of criminals endangering British society. This photo is the only direct representation of a member of the Polish diaspora in all the campaign materials analysed, and it is accompanied with the red, incriminating label of “EU MOST WANTED” stamped over Rafacz’s face. The message here is clear – EEs are a danger to British society and they are the nationality which Leave voters ‘most want’ to get rid of. As such, the entirety of the Polish diaspora becomes connected to this one dangerous, deadly and murderous individual and tarnished with the brush of criminality and undesirability.

Image 23:



**Theresa Rafacz**

Rafacz, who is a Polish national, killed her husband by kicking and stamping on his head.

EU law prevented her removal, stating that there was ‘no basis’ which could ‘justify her deportation on the grounds of public policy’

**EU MOST WANTED**

 Vote Leave, take back control on 23 June

### 4.3) Combatting Leave's anti-EU-migration concept?

While VL only vaguely and briefly constructs the EE diasporas as resource-draining, potential criminals, the Remain campaign works to combat this general anti-migrant narrative. One of the images on the OB Facebook page emphasizes that Daniel Hannan, a key Leave Campaigner, admitted that “it would be sensible for us to have an element of free movement of labour” (image 24). Another image advertises the EU Renegotiation headed by David Cameron which gives the UK the power to limit migrant access to benefits, to encourage migrants to enter the work force and not drain government welfare resources. However, these images are the only examples of campaign material which make any attempt at combatting such negative EU migrant rhetoric. The campaign otherwise lack any construction or representation of EU migrants and/or members of the EE diasporas and does not make any attempt to portray the diaspora as beneficial to British society and the labour market.

Image 24:



This remarkable absence of members of the EE diasporas in the Remain campaign material can be attributed to the Remain campaigners' unwillingness to engage in the European xenophobia and colonial nostalgia propagated by VL. By circumventing the construction of European, non-British individuals, the Remain campaign avoided having to combat the difficult and delicate topic of increased nationalist racism. However, it can also be explained through the lack of EE voters; unlike members of the SA diasporas who are predominantly British citizens with voting rights, the Polish and other EEs had no voting power in the election. The Remain campaign, therefore, did not seek to appeal to EE voters and, as such, did not need to construct positive EE representation within the campaigns.

The political engagement of these EE diasporic communities was also limited. Their lack of voting rights resulted in no socio-cultural movements, nor any prominent individuals, who were politically promoting either of the campaigns or attempting to mobilise members of the EE diasporas to vote. Unfortunately, data on the extent to which second or third generation EE migrants participated in the



elections and campaigns is thus far non-existent, as their white-European ethnicity means that they are subsumed under the category of white Brits in post-election polls and other forms of data collection. As such, the political engagement of the EE diasporas is difficult to determine, and it is consequently almost impossible to estimate to what extent VL's negative construction of EEs impacted the EE diasporas' votes.

#### **4.4) Concluding remarks**

Despite the overwhelmingly strong anti-migrant narrative of the Leave campaign which has been recurrently demonstrated throughout this thesis, and the anti-Polish backlash and high numbers of recorded assaults on Poles following the referendum (Komaromi, 2016), VL campaign material] had surprisingly few constructions of the EE diasporas, while the Remain campaign had no direct constructions. This is particularly astounding when one considers the fact that it is exactly this subgroup of migrants who were directly affected by the outcome of the referendum, and whose influx and stay in the UK could have been impacted by voting to Leave. This suggests that it was not in fact the number of incoming EU migrants which worried the Leave voters and was utilised in the campaign materials to incentivise and impact these voters' decision. But rather, it was the *type* of migrant which was presented as the problem. The overtly foreign, brown-skinned migrant with different religious views and cultural norms was presented as a much larger threat in the Leave campaign than the EU migrants with their white skin, Christian cultural heritage and similar social conventions. The occasions in which the EE migrant *was* presented in the VL campaigns, their negative connotations of poverty and crime were oftentimes overshadowed by following statements relating to terrorism. As such, the EE diaspora remains extremely underrepresented and marginalised by the more extreme constructions of other diasporic groups who are more inherently connected to the recent terrorist threats.

## **5) Conclusion**

### **5.1) Diasporic Construction**

Generally speaking, the materials analysed demonstrated that the various diasporic groups were rather homogenously constructed by VL and OB, yet the extent to which these diasporas were actively constructed differs dramatically. The constructions of the SA and EE diasporas are minimal to non-existent in both campaigns, with EEs presented as economic and criminal threats, who directly impact the lives of the working class, in the Leave campaign, but not featured at all in Remain. VL also tends to stray away from constructing any SA figure (SA Muslim included), instead propagating the image of a predominantly white British society. However, SAs feature slightly more in Remain and are represented as fully integrated British citizens. OB's positive, albeit somewhat marginalized, constructions of wholly-accepted, well-integrated migrants of Muslim and SA heritage, suggest the normalization and acceptance of diasporic individuals in the UK and acts as a refusal to engage with the racial elements of the Brexit debate. This focus on the multicultural neo-liberalism of British society appeared to appeal to younger voters, with 62% of voters aged 25-34 voting Remain (Lord Ashcroft Polls, Virdee, 2017:2).

However, as proven by the referendum outcome, the support for this notion of multiculturalism was not quite as widespread as the support for VL, suggesting that the jingoistic and harmful constructions of diasporic communities within the Leave campaign resonated among slightly more British individuals than the tolerant and multi-cultural message advocated by Remain. This appeal of Leave's racist undertones is best evidenced through their extremely negative construction of the Middle-Eastern Muslim as a figure equated with danger and terrorism. Rather than focusing on demonstrating the benefits that Brexit would bring for reducing migration of EU citizens to the UK, VL instead demonstrated the threat of remaining in the EU's freedom of movement zone, insofar as the Middle-Eastern Muslim terrorist has much easier access to the UK through the current EU diktat. As such, the VL campaign became much more preoccupied in constructing negative representations of the dangerous Muslim figure, than with constructing the EE diasporas – the diasporas which would have been most strongly impacted by the decision to leave the EU.

This narrative of the dangerous Middle-Eastern Muslim gained traction as it "dovetailed so neatly with long-standing repertoires of negatively evaluated representations accompanying the on-going racialization of the figure of the Muslim" in the Western, neo-liberal world (Virdee, 2017:6). The recent terrorist attacks in France and Belgium carried out by individuals of Middle-Eastern Muslim heritage, as well as the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis, only served to legitimize this reactionary, populist, anti-Muslim sentiment, finding a political outlet where it could manifest itself in the form of the VL

campaign. By bringing the notions of Islamic terrorism into the VL campaign, the EU referendum thus became an opportunity for Brits to act on any subconscious and/or conscious racial biases and fears they had concerning UK Muslims.

However, somewhat surprisingly and paradoxically, VL's construction of the SA Muslim was not as overtly negative – in part because they rarely featured in the campaign. By refusing to construct the SA Muslim, and any other SAs who could potentially be misconstrued as Muslim, VL reduced the risk of isolating potential SA Muslim voters through their association and conflation with the negatively constructed Middle-Eastern Muslims. The lack of SA representation in the VL campaign also served to emphasize the idealistic and utopian-esque image of a racially, religious and culturally homogenous white Britain which the Leave camp so strongly propagated. Virdee supports this finding, claiming that VL detached themselves from the UK's immigration history, instead signaling that “the Brexit project was precisely about keeping the nation Christian and white” (2017:6).

VL's herald for a white Britain with its own sovereignty and political independence from the EU fed into the preexisting nostalgia for the UK's former colonial period, in which other states were reliant on British political, economic and cultural power – encouraging imperial longing for a return to a white Britain, and its accompanying notions of British superiority and white supremacy. This narrative of imperial nostalgia proved particularly palatable for older voters, as evidenced by the voter exit poll which shows that 60% of citizens aged over 65 voted Leave (Lord Ashcroft Polls, Virdee, 2017:2). It thus becomes clear that in the minds of many voters, particularly those of the older generation, the recent influx of migrants and creation of diasporic communities in the past 70 years is interconnected with, and potentially the cause of, 1) the decline of Imperial Britain as a hegemon in the capitalist global economy, 2) the UK's loss of international prestige, 3) Britain's worsening economy and 4) the increased terrorist threat and danger.

As such, the construction of the Middle-Eastern Muslim threat in the Leave campaign was not only used to birth racism towards the diasporas, but acted as a socio-political accelerant, tapping into the long-standing racism which entered the consciousness of sectors of British society (namely the older generation) decades ago. VL thus framed the referendum as a movement representing much more than a political decision of whether to stay or remain in the EU; voting Leave became a symbolic act of patriotism whereby it represented a desire to simultaneously regain British sovereignty and international power and protect notions of Britishness from external and dangerous foreign threats. It became the political means through which one could express their belief in white cultural superiority and their view that foreign cultural and religious influences, particularly Islamic, had no place in British culture founded on white, Christian-based ethics and values. Although VL was not a direct source of anti-migrant hate, it acted as a trigger for some of the British public to carry out political anti-migrant

action, “envisag[ing it] as a sign that a set of assumed...cultural ‘norms’ could be reasserted” (Burnett, 2017:88). The VL campaign material analysed in this thesis, thus built upon the already-existent racist consciousness among some sectors of the British public and accelerated these sentiments into political action, with the goal of achieving a homogenously white, internationally powerful Britain.

## **5.2) Diasporic Engagement**

The construction of these diasporic groups goes some way in explaining the extent of their political engagement in the referendum – both in terms of their involvement in the campaigns themselves, and their voting habits. Unsurprisingly, the more positively a certain diaspora was constructed, the more likely they were to vote for that camp. As such, more Muslims and SAs voted Remain than Leave, due to VL’s lack of ethnic representation and predominantly negative diasporic construction. The turnout for voters of SA and Muslim heritage was however much lower than that of white ethnic Brits (Lord Ashcroft Polls, 2015). This can be explained, to some extent, by the lack of diasporic construction within the campaign materials themselves, as some diasporic individuals may not have been able to identify with a political campaign whose main target was white Brits and whose political underbelly was rife with post-colonial sentiments and racist undertones.

However, other factors beyond the campaign constructions could have also influenced diasporic engagement and voting habits. For EE diasporas, remaining in the EU would have presented the most beneficial outcome, particularly for those with strong connections with their home countries, as family and friends could freely travel back and forth and easily migrate. Yet, as only second or third generation EE migrants could have voted, EE diasporic political engagement remained extremely low, regardless of voting incentives. Motivations for SA and Muslim engagement were not hugely dissimilar. On the one hand, remaining in the EU could have financially benefitted small SA business owners and could also ensure advantages such as free travel and trade for SA and Muslim diasporic individuals with families throughout the EU. On the other hand, leaving the EU could have meant improved ties, migration laws and trade with Commonwealth states – including the home countries of many of the UK’s diasporas.

As such, the personal incentives for voting Leave or Remain, or for not voting at all, are just as richly diverse as those of white ethnic Brits. Diasporic engagement in national and international politics cannot therefore be simply pigeonholed as a direct reflection of how diasporas are politically constructed in political campaigns. Nevertheless, the two are irrefutably linked. As Burnett wisely claims, “if a hostile environment is embedded politically, why should we be surprised when it takes root culturally? (2017:86). In other words, it is of no coincidence that the strong anti-migrant, Islamophobic and jingoistic sentiments attached to the Leave campaign, manifested themselves in

both the voting habits and cultural attitudes of white ethnic Brits, as well as in the political involvement and votes of the UK's diasporic individuals. Only time will tell whether this recent and politicized populist upsurge against multicultural diversity, as amplified by the VL campaign, will continue to manifest in the form of colonial nostalgia and legitimized racism, and whether this will subsequently impact the political engagement and socio-cultural involvement of Britain's diasporic communities in future national political decisions.

**Word Count – 15,288**

## **Bibliography**

- Ali, Nasreen (2003), 'Diaspora and Nation: Displacement and the Politics of Kashmiri Identity in Britain' in *Contemporary South Asian*, Vol.12(4), pp.471-480
- Bachmann, Viet & James D Sidaway (2016), 'Brexit Geopolitics' in *Geoforum*, Vol.77, pp.47-50
- Bangladesh for Britain, <https://bangladeshforbritain.wordpress.com/why-leave-the-eu/>, accessed 10/02/2018
- Bertrand, Gilles (21/06/2004), 'Cypriots in Britain: Diaspora(s) Committed to Peace?' in *Turkish Studies*, Vol.5(2), pp.93-110
- Black, Richard (2010), *A Continent Moving West? EU Enlargement and Labour Migration from Central and Eastern Europe*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press
- 'British-Indians divided over Brexit' (23/06/2016), in *Indian Express*, <http://indianexpress.com/article/world/world-news/british-indians-divided-over-brexit-2871946/>, accessed 05/02/2018
- Brown, Judith M (2006), *Global South Asians: Introducing the Modern Diaspora*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Burnett, Jon (04/04/2017), 'Racial Violence and the Brexit State' in *Sage Journals*, Vol.58(4), pp.85-97
- Byford, Andy (01/06/2012), 'The Russian Diaspora in International Relations: 'Compatriots' in Britain', in *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.64(4), pp.715-735
- Chaloupka, William & Andrew Light (2000), 'Angry White Men: Right Exclusionary Nationalism and Left Identity Politics' in *Gender Ironies of Nationalism: Sexing the Nation*, pp.329-351, London: Routledge
- Cohen, Robin (1996), 'Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers' in *Ethnicity and International Relations*, Vol.72(3), pp.507-520
- Cohen, Robin (2008), *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, New York: Routledge
- Conversi, Daniele (2012), 'Irresponsible Radicalisation: Diasporas, Globalisation and Long-Distance Nationalism in the Digital Age' in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol.38(9), PP.1357-1379
- Coward, HG, Hinnels, JR & Williams, (2000), *The South Asian Religious Diaspora in Britain, Canada, and the United States*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press

- Dennison, James & Noah Carl (2016), *'The Ultimate Causes of Brexit: History, Culture and Geography'*, [blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/explaining-brexit/](https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/explaining-brexit/)
- Desai, Jigna (2004), *Beyond Bollywood: The Cultural Politics of South Asian Diasporic Film*, New York: Routledge
- Dilshad, Sarwar & Dr Razaq Raj (2016), 'Islamophobia, Racism and Critical Race Theory' in *International Journal of Safety and Security in Tourism/Hospitality*, Vol.15
- Fullfact (26/06/2015), 'How Many Syrian Refugee are there?', <https://fullfact.org/immigration/how-many-syrian-refugees-are-there-uk/>, accessed 23/03/2018
- Gellner, David; Hausner, Sondra; Adhikari, Krishna (2010), 'Shrines and Identities in Britain's Nepali Diaspora' in *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, Vol.19(1), pp.116-146
- Guardia, Arnau Busquets (24/06/2016), 'How Brexit Vote Broke Down', in *Politico*, <https://www.politico.eu/article/graphics-how-the-uk-voted-eu-referendum-brexit-demographics-age-education-party-london-final-results/>, accessed 28/01/2018
- Hall, Richard (24/06/2016), 'How the Brexit Campaign Used Refugees to Scare Voters', in *PRI*, <https://www.pri.org/stories/2016-06-24/how-brexit-campaign-used-refugees-scare-voters>, accessed 23/03/2018
- Hunter, Marcus Anthony (2017), 'Racial Physics or a Theory for Everything that Happened' in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol.40, pp.1173-1183
- Hussain, Asaf (01/10/2005), 'The Indian Diaspora in Britain: Political Interventionism and Diaspora Activism' in *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, Vol.32(3), pp.189-208
- Hussain, Serena (06/10/2014), 'Missing from the 'Minority Mainstream': Pahari-Speaking Diaspora in Britain' in *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, pp.1-15
- 'India's UK Diaspora Moves to Leverage Brexit' (08/11/2017) in *Nikkei Asian Review*
- 'Indian-Origin Minister Calls for Brexit to Boost India-UK Ties' (23/02/2016), in *Press Trust of India*, London
- Jaffrelot, C and I. Therwath (2007), 'The Sangh Parivar and the Hindu Diaspora in the West: What Kind of "Long-Distance Nationalism"?' in *International Political Sociology*, Vol.1(3), pp.278-295
- Kibria, Nazli (01/06/2012), 'Transnational Marriage and the Bangladeshi Muslim Diaspora in Britain and the United States' in *Culture and Religion*, Vol.13(2), pp.227-240

Kücükcan, Talip (01/10/2004), 'The Making of Turkish-Muslim Diaspora in Britain: Religious Collective Identity in a Multicultural Public Sphere' in *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol.24(2), pp.243-258

Kusek, Weronika (2014), *The Construction and Development of Diasporic Networks by Recent Polish Migrants to London, UK*, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses: ProQuest Dissertations Publishing

Lambert, Harry (24/06/2016), 'EU Referendum Result: 7 Graphs that Explain how Brexit Won' in *Independent*, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/eu-referendum-result-7-graphs-that-explain-how-brexit-won-eu-explained-a7101676.html>, accessed 22/02/2018

Lord Ashcroft Polls (2016), *How the UK Voted*, <http://lordashcrofppolls.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/How-the-UK-voted-Full-tables-1.pdf>, accessed 22/01/2018

Mcloughlin, Sm; Alexander, C; Redclift, V; Hussain, A (2013), 'Imagining a Muslim Diaspora in Britain? Islamic Consciousness and Homelands Old and New' in the *New Muslims Runnymede Perspectives*, pp.34-36, London: The Runnymede Trust

Miladi, Nouredine (01/08/2006), 'Satellite TV News and the Arab Diaspora in Britain: Comparing Al-Jazeera, the BBC and CNN' in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol.3(6), pp.947-960

Mogul, Priyanka (27/04/2016), 'EU Referendum: British-Indian Voters Could Have Major Impact on Brexit Ballot' in *International Business Times*, <https://www.ibtimes.co.uk/eu-referendum-british-indian-voters-could-have-major-impact-brexit-ballot-1557019>, accessed 05/02/2018

Murphy, D (2010), 'Nationalism Remixed? The Politics of Cultural Flows between the South Asian Diaspora and 'Homeland'' in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol.33(8), pp.1412-1430

Muslim Association of Britain (07/07/2016), *PR Mab Backs Vote to Remain in EU*, <https://www.mabonline.net/pr-mab-backs-vote-to-remain-in-eu/>, accessed 22/01/2018

Muslims for Britain, <https://muslimsforbritainorg.wordpress.com/>, accessed 28/01/2018

Muslims for Britain Facebook Page, <https://www.facebook.com/muslimsforbritain/>, accessed 28/01/2018

Office of National Statistics, 'Five Most Common Nationalities in the UK in 2012, 2008 to 2012', <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/ukpopulationbycountryofbirthandnationality/august2016>, accessed 09/02/2018

Office of National Statistics, 'International Migrants in England and Wales 2011', <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/internationalmigrantsinenglandandwales/2012-12-11>, accessed 09/02/2018



Office of National Statistics, *'Migration Statistics Quarterly Report: February 2016'*,  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/migrationstatisticsquarterlyreport/february2016>, accessed 09/02/2018

Office of National Statistics, *'Religion'*,  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion>, accessed 09/02/2018

Office of National Statistics, *'2011 Census Analysis: Ethnicity and Religion of the Non-UK Born Population in England and Wales'*,  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/articles/2011censusanalysisethnicityandreligionofthenonukbornpopulationinenglandandwales/2015-06-18>, accessed 09/02/2018

Official Labour Market Statistics, Nomis, *'Small Population – 2011 Census'*,  
[http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/small\\_population](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/small_population), accessed 09/02/2018

Open Britain Facebook Page, <https://www.facebook.com/OpenBritain/>, accessed 02/01/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (25/02/2016), *'Brexit: Why You & Your Family are Better off in Europe'*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSICM-WDHTY&index=5&list=PLXPE32Atb5EyysOmBL5LZuMX5T57lpIII>, accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (03/03/2016), *'Brexit and the EU: The 6 Key Facts You Need to Know'*,  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3cAN-zpnHg&index=1&list=PLXPE32Atb5Ew3qMDT\\_BipDDwS\\_KcraqSq](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3cAN-zpnHg&index=1&list=PLXPE32Atb5Ew3qMDT_BipDDwS_KcraqSq), accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (30/05/2016), *'I'm IN'*,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMYIvK6DEOg&list=PLXPE32Atb5Ex4lAlwm297Pw7ZRarHgEgv&index=4>, accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (02/04/2016), *'Jobs and the EU Referendum'*,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5cpVn3xN20&list=PLXPE32Atb5EzJdb1eZPIF9wunOL6KiuMC&index=2>, accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (16/06/2016), *'Labour Say Vote REMAIN'*,  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPeQK\\_fmGos&list=PLXPE32Atb5Ew3qMDT\\_BipDDwS\\_KcraqSq&index=8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPeQK_fmGos&list=PLXPE32Atb5Ew3qMDT_BipDDwS_KcraqSq&index=8), accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (30/05/2016), '*Sadiq Khan & David Cameron on Brexit*',  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjQjatWgTKY&index=3&list=PLXPE32Atb5Ex4IAIwm297Pw7ZRarHgEgv>, accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (04/12/2015), '*Small Businesses are Stronger IN*',  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T\\_KmisyqtaI&list=PLXPE32Atb5EzJdb1eZPIF9wunOL6KiuMC&index=5](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_KmisyqtaI&list=PLXPE32Atb5EzJdb1eZPIF9wunOL6KiuMC&index=5), accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (13/04/2016), '*The Most Important Thing You Can Tell Your Parents*',  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9dNFDKq6ly4&index=6&list=PLXPE32Atb5EwB10SxF-skgCNezo9SvoJV>, accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (21/06/2016), '*Vote Remain for Their Future*',  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ama6Qdj7Fgg&index=16&list=PLXPE32Atb5EwB10SxF-skgCNezo9SvoJV>, accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (08/06/2016), '*What Do Experts Think About Brexit?*',  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69sNgfbU9Gs&list=PLXPE32Atb5EzuyiiZTBR-hAOqfal5a6xV>,  
accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (24/05/2016), '*What Does the EU Referendum Mean for Sam's Future?*' [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qe7UUa62\\_6c&list=PLXPE32Atb5EwB10SxF-skgCNezo9SvoJV&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qe7UUa62_6c&list=PLXPE32Atb5EwB10SxF-skgCNezo9SvoJV&index=2), accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (25/04/2016), '*What Would Brexit Mean for my Children?*',  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBvUW3ryS9Y&list=PLXPE32Atb5EzJdb1eZPIF9wunOL6KiuMC>,  
accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (22/05/2016), '*What Would Brexit Mean for the NHS?*',  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dMxT5fp6-fw&list=PLXPE32Atb5Ew3qMDT\\_BipDDwS\\_KcraqSq&index=5](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dMxT5fp6-fw&list=PLXPE32Atb5Ew3qMDT_BipDDwS_KcraqSq&index=5), accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (14/01/2016), '*Why the EU Referendum and Brexit Matters to You*',  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6nocDZNcgA&list=PLXPE32Atb5Ew3qMDT\\_BipDDwS\\_KcraqSq&index=4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6nocDZNcgA&list=PLXPE32Atb5Ew3qMDT_BipDDwS_KcraqSq&index=4), accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (11/03/2016), '*Women In – International Women's Day 2016 Event*',  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=repTFC\\_j8eE&list=PLXPE32Atb5Ex4IAIwm297Pw7ZRarHgEgv&index=10](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=repTFC_j8eE&list=PLXPE32Atb5Ex4IAIwm297Pw7ZRarHgEgv&index=10), accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (11/04/2016), 'Why We're Stronger IN',  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kG2HJgRXkW8&index=11&list=PLXPE32Atb5Ex4IAIwm297Pw7ZRarHgEgv>, accessed 03/02/2018

Open Britain YouTube Channel (15/03/2016), '100 Days to Secure our Future – Stronger in Europe',  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VI5mlWx0sx0&list=PLXPE32Atb5EzJdb1eZPIF9wunOL6KiuMC&index=4>, accessed 03/02/2018

Østergaard-Nielsen, Eva (01/07/2003), 'The Democratic Deficit of Diaspora Politics: Turkish Cypriots in Britain and the Cyprus Issue' in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol.29(4), pp.683-700

'Outreach Groups' on *Vote Leave website*,  
[http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/outreach\\_groups.html](http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/outreach_groups.html), accessed 10/02/2018

Palat, Ravi Arvind (2015), 'Empire, Food and the Diaspora: Indian Restaurants in Britain' in *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, Vol.38(2), pp.171-186

Parutis, V (2006), 'Construction of Home by Polish and Lithuanian Migrants in the UK', in *Economics Working Papers 64*, Centre for the Study of Economic and Social Change Europe, London: UCL

Raman, P (2015), 'It's Because We're Indian, Innit?' Cricket and the South Asian Diaspora in Post-War Britain' in *Identities*, Vol.22(2), pp.215-229

Ranaj, Yudhvir (20/06/2016), 'Majority of Sikhs want to Remain with EU, claims Survey of Sikh Network' in *Times of India*, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/amritsar/Majority-of-Sikhs-want-to-remain-with-EU-claims-survey-of-Sikh-Network/articleshow/52834966.cms>, accessed 12/01/2018

Shah, Saeeda & Muhammad Iqbal (2011), 'Pakistani Diaspora in Britain: Intersections of Multi-Locationality and Girls' Education' in *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol.32(5), pp.763-783

Sharma, Sheetal (2014), 'Social and Political Participation of Indian Diaspora in the UK' in *International Studies*, Vol.51(1-4), pp.118-132

Sian, Katy (2016), *Bursting the Liberal Bubble: Racism in the Era of Brexit and Trump*,  
[blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/post-racial-dystopia/](https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/post-racial-dystopia/)

Sikh Community & Youth Services (22/06/2016), 'Sikh Council UK Advises Vote Remain',  
<https://www.facebook.com/SCYSnottingham/photos/a.202863203097481.64985.192904867426648/1185927574791034/?type=3&theater>, accessed 12/01/2018

Sikh Council UK Website, [www.sikhcounciluk.org](http://www.sikhcounciluk.org), accessed 13/01/2018

Sikh Federation UK, [www.sikhfeduk.com](http://www.sikhfeduk.com), accessed 13/01/2018

Sökefeld, Martin (2006), 'Mobilizing in Transnational Space: A Social Movement Approach to the Formation of Diaspora' in *Global Networks*, Vol.6(3), pp.265-284

Sökefeld, Martin; Wonneberger, Astrid; Gandelsman-Trier, Mijal; Dorsch, Hauke (2016), *The Kashmiri Diaspora in Britain and the Limits of Political Mobilisation*, Munich: Ludwig-Maximilians-University

Stewart, Heather & Rowena Mason (16/06/2016), 'Nigel Farage's Anti-Migrant Poster Reported to Police' in *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/16/nigel-farage-defends-ukip-breaking-point-poster-queue-of-migrants>, accessed 12/02/2018

Tomlinson, Sally & Danny Dorling (2016), 'Brexit has its Roots in the British Empire – so how do we explain it to the young?', <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/staggers/2016/05/brexit-has-its-roots-british-empire-so-how-do-we-explain-it-young>, accessed 29/01/2018

Virdee, Satnam & Brendan Mcqeever (18/08/2017), 'Racism, Crisis, Brexit' in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp.1-18

Vote Leave Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/voteleave/>, accessed 02/01/2018

'Vote Leave Leaflet' on *Vote Leave website*, [http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/our\\_case.html](http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/our_case.html), accessed 10/02/2018

Vote Leave YouTube Channel (17/12/2015), 'Heroes', <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67s9XQB3ipE>, accessed 03/02/2018

Vote Leave YouTube Channel (06/05/2016), 'How Would you Spend £350 Million?', [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yD1VRms5Q\\_c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yD1VRms5Q_c), accessed 03/02/2018

Vote Leave YouTube Channel (20/05/2016), 'Paving the Road From Ankara', <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8su2vCq950>, accessed 03/02/2018

Vote Leave YouTube Channel (23/05/2016), 'Which NHS Will You Vote For?', <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtlGN8wVnis>, accessed 03/02/2018

Vote Leave YouTube Channel (31/05/2016), 'Win £50 Million with Kevin and Gary!', <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFqmeptq0AU>, accessed 03/02/2018

Vote Leave YouTube Channel (03/06/2016), 'You Can't Trust David Cameron on Immigration', <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oa1uwwEb2ok>, accessed 03/02/2018

Werbner, Pnina (2004), "Theorising Complex Diasporas: Purity and Hybridity in the South Asian Public Sphere in Britain", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol.30.5, pp.895-911

'Why Vote Leave?' on *Vote Leave website*,

[http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/why\\_vote\\_leave.html](http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/why_vote_leave.html), accessed 10/02/2018

Wilcock, Cathy (17/02/2018), 'Mobilising Towards and Imagining Homelands: Diaspora Formation among U.K. Sudanese' in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol.44(3), pp.363-381