

The final nail in the coffin?

An analysis of the UKIP's framing of multiculturalism in the context of Brexit



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Abstract

Polling done by Ashcroft suggests a high correlation between people who thought that multiculturalism was a “force for ill” and a vote in favour Brexit. Nonetheless, very little research has been carried out on providing explanations to this relationship. Thusly, my research paper attempts to analyse how UKIP framed multiculturalism before and during the Brexit campaign (from 2015-2016) by conducting a political discourse analysis. My findings suggest that UKIP framed multiculturalism as a failed policy that was to blame for the perceived lack of integration of minorities communities in British society. Furthermore, this backlash to multiculturalism led to a defining of British identity through the “othering” of these same communities, and a fervent rejection of Islam. Lastly, the framing of multiculturalism as a failed policy also creates the “othering” of the political establishment (who support multiculturalism), thus continuing the discourse of the “people” against the “elite”.

Key Definitions

Multiculturalism: In this research paper, I define multiculturalism as the “*presence of several distinct cultural or ethnic groups within a society*”. Thusly, I do not define multiculturalism as an ideology. However, I understand the use of term *multiculturalism* in political science concerns the policies and tools used by the state to ensure the maintenance of ethnic, racial, and cultural minorities that are not “native”. Nonetheless, when approaching the term through its ideological character, I will use term *multiculturalist policies* or *doctrine of multiculturalism*.

Populism: I define populism using Cas Mudde’s definition, that is: *a thin-centred ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups: “the pure people” and “the corrupt elite,” and argues that politics should be an expression of the general will of the people*. Nonetheless, as the focus of this research paper is multiculturalism and UKIP, I argue that the emphasis on nativism and ethnonationalism characteristic of UKIP is also central to its definition.

Introduction

On the 16th of June 2016, Ipsos Mori, a well-known survey organisation, released its' final referendum poll ahead of the United Kingdom's Referendum on its Membership in the European Union (Ipsos MORI, 2016a). Named the Ipsos MORI Issues Index, it revealed that concern with the EU had reached its highest level since 1999, with 32% considering it an important issue (Ipsos MORI, 2016b). However, it still trailed the NHS (37%) and immigration (48%) (Ipsos MORI, 2016b). Furthermore, immigration was considered the most important issue for people likely to vote "Leave" (52%) in comparison to "Remain" (only 14%) (Ipsos MORI, 2016c). Likely "Remain" voters thought the economy was more important than immigration (Ipsos MORI, 2016c).

The following week, immigration was indeed one the main reasons why the *Leave* campaign triumphed, with 80% of people who thought immigration was a force for ill voting "Leave" (Ashcroft, 2016). However, what was more indicative of the result was the 81% of people who considered *multiculturalism* as a force for ill voting in favour of Brexit (Ashcroft, 2016). Indeed, Lord Ashcroft's poll suggests a deeply divided country on nearly every key issue (Ashcroft, 2016). But it begs the question, why did thinking of multiculturalism as a "force for ill" correlate with a Leave vote more so than any other social ideology or construct, including Feminism, social liberalism, or the Green movement? It seems that those who disagreed with multiculturalism were more mobilised to vote Leave than any other social construct or ideology.

Thusly, this will be the main topic of my research paper. More specifically, I will answer **how did UKIP** (the main political party behind the Leave vote) **frame multiculturalism during the Brexit campaign?** By answering this question, I look to contribute to the little research that has been conducted regarding multiculturalism and its role in the United Kingdom's Referendum on Membership in the European Union. I argue that it is important to conduct this research, as the capacity to mobilise an important part of British people over an issue that is often overlooked may contribute to other discussions on the backlash to immigration. Therefore, *a priori* it seems the backlash to the cultural elements of multiculturalism and immigration mobilised more voters than any other issue, including the economy, sovereignty, etc.

To answer this question, I will first provide a literature review on the main work carried out by scholars relating to multiculturalism, the cultural backlash through the rise of populism, and Brexit as the opposition to globalisation. After mapping out multiculturalism in the United

Kingdom, I will analyse the political discourse of UKIP before and during the Brexit campaign, specifically considering how the populist party framed multiculturalism. Finally, I will present my findings and offer some concluding remarks.

Literature Review

Introduction

The literature surrounding multiculturalism and the Brexit process can be divided into three categories. The first concerns the rise of populism as a backlash of the cultural elements of globalisation. Scholars such as Bhambra, Mudde, Semul, and others, contend that the rise of populism should be analysed through the perceived “failures and shortcomings” of globalist policies, which resulted in the British electorate feeling “left behind” and disillusioned, thus creating a binary reading of the referendum as a contest between populism and globalisation.

The second category revolves around the “Cultural Backlash Thesis” formulated by Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. The two scholars analyse Brexit as a backlash to the *silent revolution* that occurred in Europe from the 1970s onwards, as the high existential security characteristic of Western society saw a shift towards favouring post-materialist. The traditional electorate, who saw the norms and values they historically supported begin to appear “out of place”, used populism as their political vehicle to challenge the rise of progressive values.

The final category constitutes the history of multiculturalism in the United Kingdom. Parting from the end of the Second World War, scholars Richard T. Ashcroft and Mark Bevir posit that the opening of borders to an influx of immigrants from former colonies and Commonwealth nations was initially envisioned to maintain Britain’s power and influence at the head of the Commonwealth. Nonetheless, racial tensions and the loss of influence saw the United Kingdom weaken its’ multicultural policies, with David Cameron declaring “the State doctrine of Multiculturalism is dead”.

Populism versus (Cultural) Globalisation

The result of the British Referendum on Membership in the European Union, now coined as “Brexit”, was seen as a triumph of populism over globalisation, with international relations scholars left baffled by the victory of the Leave campaign (Semul, 2018). The Brexit campaign itself was considered as the latest political contest in Europe pitting populist forces against the contemporary predominance of globalisation which had created a divide between “*winner and losers*”, with the latter tired of being shunned by their political representatives (Mudde, 2017). Rodrick understands the result as a combination of the working-class losing their jobs to outsourcing, and the supranational organisations such as the European Union and the United Nations having lost touch with their voters (Rodrick, 2020). Furthermore, Frankel ascertains that the triumph of the Leave campaign was evidence that the lower and middle-class felt left behind (Frankel, 2016).

Semul argues that the rise of populism in Europe was a direct response to the globalist policies that the EU follows, in addition to the European sovereign debt crisis and the failure of the Greek economy (Semul, 2018). Furthermore, Kellner observes that though an increase in immigration is a direct consequence of globalisation, populist forces flattened the term and used it to refer only to an economy run by elites (Kellner, 2017). Nonetheless, Bhambra looks to deconstruct the myth that the working-class had voted in favour of Brexit because they felt left behind by globalisation, arguing that the opposition to immigration was primarily cultural in character (Bhambra, 2017). Bhambra’s emphasises that concerns about globalisation were mostly euphemisms for concerns about the presence of racial and ethnic minorities, with the electorate that voted in favour of withdrawing from the European Union overwhelming white, old, male, traditional, and religious (Bhambra, 2017).

Thus, the ascendancy of populism garnered support by generating a backlash against the rising number of immigrants and asylum seekers. As Hans-Georg Betz points out: “*It should come as no surprise that the emergence and rise of radical right-wing populist parties in Western Europe coincided with the growing tide of immigrants and particularly the dramatic increase in the number of refugees seeking peace, security, and a better life in the affluent societies of Western Europe. The reaction to the new arrivals was an outburst of xenophobia and open racism in a majority of West European countries... This has made it relatively easy for the radical populist Right to evoke, focus, and reinforce preexisting xenophobic sentiments for political gain*” (Betz, 1994: 81). The backlash to immigration ties in with the work of Corbett

and Walker, as populism draws on an idealised “heartland”, which is threatened by the “other” (Corbett & Walker, 2019). Therefore, populism should be considered as an ideology that rejects globalisation in favour of ethnonationalism, that is, the framing of the nation as one ethnic community sharing a common language, religion, and culture (Lopez-Alves & Johnson, 2019). Lopez-Alves and Johnson argue that the framing of the community through ethnicity necessarily creates the “other” (Lopez-Alves & Johnson, 2019). In the case of the United Kingdom and the Brexit campaign, this brought an increase in anti-Islamification and an emphasis to crack down on cultural practices contrary to “British values” (Lopez-Alves & Johnson, 2019).

Another aspect of populism that was born from its backlash to globalisation was the emphasis on nativism (Swank & Betz, 2018). Swank and Betz define nativism as the “*exposed partiality to the native-born and their culture in preference to the foreign-born*” (Swank & Betz, 2018: 4) Furthermore, Mudde argues that nativism was predominant in the discourse of the Leave campaign, and in effect transformed into xenophobia towards Muslims and Eastern European (Mudde, 2017). Populist forces exalted the need to keep the foreign “other” at bay, thus defining “Britishness” through race, religion, and nationality (Macgregor-Bowles & Bowles, 2017). Swank and Betz continue by arguing that this emphasis on nativism is universally imbedded in the election manifestos of right-wing populist parties, viewing immigration as a threat to their cultural values (Swank & Betz, 2018). Thus, populist parties view immigration as a threat to their identity and sovereignty, with Rodrick’s work showing how an increase in immigration to the United Kingdom from 12 recent EU accession countries was associated with a vote in favour of Brexit (Rodrick, 2020). Thus, the political backlash to globalisation was rooted in its cultural consequences rather than economic dislocation (Rodrick, 2020).

The Cultural Backlash Thesis

Norris and Inglehart frame the rise of populism through their cultural backlash thesis. Explaining its rise as a social psychological phenomenon, the authors argue that there was a nostalgic reaction against the *Silent Revolution* (Norris & Inglehart, 2016). Outlined by Inglehart, the *silent revolution* was the idea that “*the publics of post-industrial societies are shifting from giving top priority to “Materialist” goals such as economic and physical security to placing increasingly strong emphasis on self-expression and the quality of life*” (Inglehart, 1971: 685). Subsequent studies by Norris and Inglehart suggest that the high levels of security

and economic stability in the affluent societies in the West brought a shift toward post-materialist values (Inglehart, 1990; Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005; Norris & Inglehart, 2011). The rise of progressive values is reflected in the increased tolerance of the younger, post-war generation regarding diverse forms of sexuality, identity, and an open-mindedness towards immigration, cosmopolitanism, and multiculturalism (Norris & Inglehart, 2016). The process of cultural change was correlated with the large-scale immigration characteristic of post-war Europe, higher levels of education among adults, and the increased urbanisation (Norris & Inglehart, 2019). Furthermore, the cultural shift also brought to the fore progressive social movements and increased transnational activism that introduced post-materialist values such as environmental protection, LGBTQ rights, discrimination, and human rights to the political realm (Norris & Inglehart, 2016). Thusly, the emphasis on social class and economic stability that dominated traditional politics was replaced by an increasing importance to cultural issues and social identities (Norris & Inglehart, 2016).

The authors argue that the *silent revolution* was met by a nostalgic reaction from older, traditionalist generations (Norris & Inglehart, 2016). Values and norms that were predominant in society and held by previous generations became out of place with the contemporary cultural shift in Western society, thus triggering a negative reaction in traditionalists who were resentful and angry with this displacement (Norris & Inglehart, 2016). In the United Kingdom this resulted in what Sobolewska and Ford label as “culture wars”, in which white voters “*have an ethnic identity which can be politically mobilised and hold complex and politically consequential racial attitudes driven by their identity attachments*” (Sobolewska & Ford, 2019: 148). Thus, generations that held traditional values that were seemingly out of place in an increasingly progressive society were more likely to hold hostile attitudes towards immigrants and ethnic minorities (Norris & Inglehart, 2016). Furthermore, as mentioned in the previous section, older cohorts are more likely to support populist forces that campaign against this cultural shift toward post-materialist and progressive values (Norris & Inglehart, 2016). Norris and Inglehart argue that the Brexit campaign achieved this by employing a rhetoric that returned to a time where the United Kingdom had not joined the European Union, where society was predominantly white, and Great Britain still enjoyed a significant level of global power and influence as the head of the Commonwealth (Norris & Inglehart, 2016). The use of nostalgia was key to mobilising the older, traditional British electorate to vote in favour of the Leave campaign, in addition to emphasising the perceived lack of economic insecurity and inequality as a consequence of globalisation, thus shifting the political focus onto the importance of

stability that characterised society before the rise of the *silent revolution* (Norris & Inglehart, 2016).

The Historical Context of Multiculturalism in Great Britain: From Attlee to Cameron

The British National Act of 1948 and *British exceptionalism*

Though the creation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain through the Act of Union of 1707 can be considered as the foundation of the first multinational state in Britain, which in turn would lead to the forging of a “British” identity based on its struggle with the French and the subsequent empire-building that would last until the end of the Second World War (Colley, 1992), the process of decolonisation that characterised the post-war period constituted a threat to the British sense of self (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). Thusly, the Labour government of Clement Attlee would outline a post-war project with the intent of re-establishing Great Britain’s dominance at the head of the Commonwealth, including the “*creation of a citizenship that provided a full range of civil, political and socio-economic rights*” (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019: 27) and characterised by its actively anti-racist ideal (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). The project was carried out through the passing of the British National Act of 1948, which constituted a re-definition of British nationality. As noted by Ashcroft and Bevir, the BNA should be viewed as a “*symbolic way of reasserting Britain’s status as a “mother country”*” (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019: 28).

The most notable factor of the BNA was the creation of two categories of citizens who enjoyed the same rights in the United Kingdom: Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies (CUKC), and Citizens of Independent Commonwealth Countries (CICC) (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). Furthermore, the BNA granted *statutory* rights to emigrate to the United Kingdom, in addition to ceding UK citizenship to every national of the Empire, including those who lacked citizenship from their independent country (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). Thus, with this new definition of citizenship, the British National Act of 1948 should be understood as a continuation of *British exceptionalism* through its’ Commonwealth (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019).

Notably, the Act received bipartisan support, from both Attlee's Labour government and the opposition led by Winston Churchill, though underlined by a "*confluence of interests*" (Ashcroft & Bevir: 28). Ashcroft and Bevir argue that this confluence of interests stemmed firstly from the social democratic faction in the Labour party which understood any attempt to differentiate between white and non-white immigration as racist, thus "*undermining the rhetoric of British exceptionalism that justified the UK's role of the Commonwealth*" (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019: 28); and secondly, from factions in the Conservative party that still had connections with the "Old" Commonwealth, and were more sceptical of the non-white immigration that was coming from the "New" Commonwealth (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). Nonetheless, the need to guarantee the United Kingdom's role as head of the Commonwealth effectively meant that no modifications were made to the Act until the 1960s (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019).

The exceptionalism of British multiculturalism

The 1960s and 1970s would see the birth of a distinct type of multiculturalism, coined by Ashcroft and Bevir as *Janus-faced multiculturalism* (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2017: 5), though I prefer the concept *Walnut multiculturalism*. This new approach was a direct consequence of the failure to secure their position of influence during the Cold War (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). In addition, the effects of the BNA 1948 had exacerbated into a huge influx in non-white immigration, which in turn led to tensions in the country, as seen with the Notting Hill and Nottingham race riots of the late 1950s (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). Thus, these two consequences led to cross-party action which changed the policy on multiculturalism, agreeing on a bifurcated legal framework consisting of "*tough immigration controls and a strong internal relation of broad citizenship with an emphasis on integration*" (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019: 29). The tightening of immigration controls was materialised through a series of Commonwealth Immigration Acts.

The first, the Act of 1962, approved under the administration of Conservative Prime Minister Harold MacMillan, outlined that all citizens of the Commonwealth, including CUKCs, were subject to immigration control despite possessing citizenship guaranteed under the BNA of 1948 (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). The second, approved under the Labour government of Harold Wilson in 1968, saw the rights of Commonwealth citizens to reside in the United Kingdom diminished further amidst the concern of the possibility that 200.000 Kenyan Asians would

seek residence in the country due to the *Africanisation* policy undertaken by the Kenyan government (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). Finally, the previous acts were superseded by the Immigration Act of 1971 which would see the United Kingdom, under the auspices of Prime Minister Edward Heath, effectively grant citizenship based on whiteness, introducing the concepts of *patriality* and *right of abode* which remain in force until today (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019).

Notably, though the Act of 1962 was met with intense criticism by the leader of the opposition Hugh Gaitskell, who argued that the act was “*cruel and brutal anti-colour legislation*”, the subsequent Labour government of Harold Wilson furthered the toughening of immigration policies through the Act of 198 (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). Nonetheless, this hard outside approach was correlated with an emphasis on ameliorating the internal race-relations regime, outlined through the approval of the Race Relations Act of 1965, the first piece of legislation to ban discrimination in public spaces based on “*colour, race, or ethnic or national origins*”. Subsequently, the Race Relations Act of 1968 furthered these efforts by eradicating discrimination in housing and employment (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). Finally, the Labour government of James Callaghan enacted the Race Relations Act of 1976, approved by Parliament, which introduced the Commission for Racial Equality, aimed at, among other objectives, “*encouraging greater integration, the use of its legal powers to eradicate discrimination, and working with the Government and local authorities to promote racial equality*”. Thus, the British multiculturalist policies of these two decades, with its “toughness” on the outside, through tougher immigration controls, and “softness” on the inside, with the approval of the Race Relations Acts, should be considered as a *Walnut multiculturalism* which would define the government’s approach for the following years.

The *status quo* of the Thatcherite years

Though the government of Margaret Thatcher departed from the economic and social policies that characterised the Labour governments during the 1970s, the bifurcated approach to multiculturalism was mostly maintained during her time as Prime Minister (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). The most notable modification came with the approval of the British National Act of 1981, which abolished the status of British subject, replaced with *Commonwealth citizen*, in addition to outlining that the right to abode could no longer be acquired by non-British citizens. Finally, the Act would see a shift away from the *jus soli* right to acquire British citizenship,

opting instead to grant citizenship based on elements of *jus sanguinis* (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). Nonetheless, though Ashcroft and Bevir analyse the piece of legislation as the “*embodiment of a cultural nationalism with racialised overtones*” (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019: 32), the Labour approach of emphasising integration over assimilation was continued by Margaret Thatcher (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019).

The Local Government Act of 1985, approved in view of the perceived “excesses” of local governments, saw the dissolution of various county councils and a reduction of funding at the local authoritative level (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). However, as Ashcroft and Bevir argue, local authorities continued to control substantial funds, thus allowing them to uptake welfare responsibilities (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). This new dynamic saw local Labour authorities embark on an active anti-racist approach, in addition to valorising the different cultures and ethnicities that constituted each council (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). In essence, the Labour Party continued its’ commitment to multiculturalism, and its policies were entrenched at the local level (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). The emphasis on local governance as the main driver for multiculturalist policies was a core ideal under “New Labour”.

New Labour’s approach to multiculturalism and Cameron’s “One Nation” Conservatism

The re-branding of the Labour Party under the leadership of Tony Blair saw its social democratic personality reshape the future of multiculturalism in Great Britain (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). Firstly, the importance of local governance was linked to a “*revitalised sense of citizenship, trust, and obligation to the community*” (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019: 34). Furthermore, New Labour re-emphasised the role of the welfare state, extending the reach of the race-relations regime, consolidating anti-discrimination legislation in British law, and committing to the bifurcated framework that has dominated multiculturalist policies since Clement Attlee by amending the 1976 Race Relations Act to cover all areas in targeting racial discrimination (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019).

Nonetheless, the beginning of the 2000s would see a rise in tensions that would trigger a re-evaluation of Labour’s multiculturalism policies (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). The Oldham riots of 2001 emphasised the long-term tensions between different ethnic groups, and, in addition to the terrorist attacks on 9/11, British intervention in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and the London Bombings in 2005, New Labour accelerated their modification of their multiculturalist

policies to “*emphasis the need for immigrants and minority groups to assimilate British values and traditions*” (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019: 35). This shift in policy was materialised through a new nationality test, the introduction of “ideological” criteria to be eligible for community funding, the tightening of immigration, asylum, and anti-terrorism legislation (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019). In essence, the failure of their multiculturalist policies saw New Labour begin a process of abandoning their pluralistic approach in a favour of re-centralisation the traditions and values of Britain (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2019).

This shift in assimilation over integration was continued by the Conservative government of David Cameron, who stated in a speech at the Munich Security conference of 2011 that: “*the state doctrine of multiculturalism is dead*” (BBC, 2011). Blaming the multiculturalist approach for the “*weakening of our collective identity*” (Daily Telegraph, 2011), David Cameron outlined his vision as a “One Nation” conservative by stating: “*For too long, we have been a passively tolerant society, saying to our citizens: as long as you obey the law, we will leave you alone. It’s often meant we have stood neutral between different values. And that’s helped foster a narrative of extremism and grievance [...] This Government will conclusively turn the page on this failed approach. As the party of one nation, we will govern as one nation, and bring our country together. That means actively promoting certain values*” (BBC, 2011). Thus, Cameron’s retreat from the pluralistic nature of multiculturalism toward an appeal to “unique” British values should be considered as a shift towards “assimilation” as opposed to the “integration” approach which has historically dominated in British politics and legislation (Ashcroft & Bevir, 2017).

Conclusion

The existing literature surrounding multiculturalism and Brexit can be classified into three groups. The first, the rise of populism as a backlash to globalisation was the consequence of the working-class feeling disillusioned with their political representatives and the economic hardships due to the globalist policies espoused by the European Union. Nonetheless, Bhambra ascertains that concerns of globalisation were often euphemisms for concerns of the presence of racial and ethnic minorities. Betz, furthering Bhambra’s argument, posits that populism fed off the backlash to immigrants and the migrants. Other scholars note the rise in ethnonationalist

and nativist discourses as key aspects of populism, with the definition of *Britishness* constituted through the “othering” of ethnic minorities. Thusly, the backlash to globalisation was mostly cultural in character.

Secondly, Norris and Inglehart analyse the rise of populism through their Cultural Backlash Thesis. The scholars postulate the existence of a nostalgic reaction of older generations to the consolidation of progressive values during the *silent revolution*. This process of cultural change was emphasised by the influx of large-scale immigration, which was met by a backlash by older and more traditionalist generations who were angry and resentful that the norms and values they held were seemingly out of place in contemporary society. Thusly, they channelled their frustration through support of populist parties, who used a nostalgic rhetoric to mobilise the electorate.

Finally, Ashcroft and Bevir map out the extensive history of multiculturalism in contemporary Britain. Starting with the government of Clement Attlee, the scholars argue that the redefinition of citizenship and opening of borders was a project that looked to cement the United Kingdom’s influence and power as head of the Commonwealth. Nonetheless, with the decadence of influence came a modification of the country’s multiculturalist policies, which I termed as *walnut multiculturalism*, with tough immigration controls complemented by an internal race-regime that sought to integrate ethnic immigrants into mainstream British society. The Thatcherite years continued the *status quo*, but the New Labour government of Tony Blair looked to revamp the multiculturalist policies, seeking a greater integration through local governance. However, the backlash and perceived “failure” of multiculturalism saw the final years of New Labour pursue new policies characterised by the need for ethnic minorities to assimilate “British” values and traditions. This was continued by David Cameron’s *One Nation* conservatism, that ultimately led to Great Britain’s withdrawal from the European Union.

The current literature is extensive on the rise of populism as a backlash to the failure of multiculturalism and the predominance of progressive values. Furthermore, Ashcroft and Bevir’s work on multiculturalism in contemporary Britain is vast and contributes to the understanding of multiculturalism and its policies up until the present day. Nonetheless, I have identified a gap specifically regarding the framing of multiculturalism by the United Kingdom Independence Party. Very little research has been done concerning how its’ framing contributing to the triumph of the *Leave* campaign. Thusly, my research paper will look to

understand and analyse UKIP's framing of multiculturalism in relation to broader result of the Brexit referendum, therefore contributing to a new body of research.

Methodology

This research paper will use the definition of "political discourse" provided by van Dijk, that is "*the text and talk of professional politicians or political institutions, such as presidents and prime ministers and other members of government, parliament or political parties, both at the local, national and international levels, includes both the speaker and the audience*" (van Dijk, 1997: 12). Thusly, I will focus on political discourse of UKIP between 2014 and 2016, specifically regarding their framing of multiculturalism, adopting a Political Discourse Analysis (hereon PDA) by focusing on the linguistic and discursive dimensions of political text as a way of constructing and reproducing beliefs, ideas, and ideologies. As outlined by van Dijk, PDA should contribute to both political science and the social sciences more generally (van Dijk, 1997). In this manner, I will look to contribute to the limited but growing research on multiculturalism in discourse. Moreover, I will only focus on discourse produced by the "central players in polity" (van Dijk, 1997), and therefore highlighting the political text and talk of UKIP before and during the Brexit referendum campaign¹. Furthermore, discourse is only political when it has a functional role as a form of political action in the political process (van Dijk, 1997), I will limit my focus to speeches and campaign videos that were broadcasted to the wider public.

In addition, I will look to build on the work of Chilton and his analysis of political discourse, in which he analyses language as having the function of indicating what is harmful or useful, what is good or evil, and that "*producing and sharing of a common view regarding these concepts is an intrinsic part of constituting a social or political group*" (Chilton, 2004: 199). Moreover, though I will not use a Critical Discourse Analysis, I acknowledge Chilton's idea that it is impossible to analyse political language behaviour without exercising one's political

¹ Though my three samplings of discourse technically fall outside the "official campaign period", I argue that since the *raison d'être* of UKIP was to achieve the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, coupled with the fact that UKIP political process was a continued campaign to leave the EU, I believe that UKIP's campaigning for a "Brexit" has been going on since its' foundation. Thusly, as opposed to other political parties, UKIP and its political representatives have been creating political discourse on withdrawing from the European Union since its' inception.

intuitions (Chilton, 2004). Thusly, I will analyse the political discourse around the framing of multiculturalism during the Brexit referendum campaign through Chilton's twelve propositions: (1) *that political discourse operates indexically*, (2) *political discourse operates on interaction*, (3) *that interaction functions to negotiate representation*, (4) *that recursive properties of language subserve political interaction*, (5) *that modal properties of language subserve political interaction*, (6) *that binary conceptualisations are frequent in political discourse*, (7) *that political representation are sets of role-players and their relations*, (8) *that political discourse draw on spatial recognition*, (9) *that political discourse involves metaphorical reasoning*, (10) *that spatial metaphors make concepts of the group and identity available*, (11) *that political discourse has specific connections to the emotional centres of the brain*, (12) *that political discourse is anchored in multi-dimensional deixis* (Chilton, 2004: 200-202).

PDA Method, Tools, and Justification of Sampling

Through applying a PDA, I will use a series of theoretical tools to approach the political discourse surrounding multiculturalism. For starters, I will identify the main themes or patterns found in the political discourse of UKIP regarding multiculturalism, then comparing it to the ideological and historical context of multiculturalism before, during, and after the referendum. In addition, I will provide a social and historical context in which the discourse is developed, to provide the reader a general sense of the context in which the discourse happened, thus directly addressing the who, to whom, the when, and the where. Finally, I will analyse the function and the meaning of the language used, and how the discourse continues or challenges the dominant threads regarding multiculturalism.

My focus on how UKIP framed multiculturalism is due to two reasons. Firstly, the United Kingdom Independence Party was the only British political party totally unified in its' desire to the withdraw from the European Union (Hughes, 2019; Tournier-Sol, 2020). Moreover, UKIP's ability to mobilise the electorate is considered by the same scholars as one of the main reasons the *Leave* campaign eventually triumphed. Thusly, though I could have sampled from the *Vote Leave* campaign, I believe that UKIP's influence in the months before the Brexit campaign offers the best insight in understating how multiculturalism was framed. Secondly, there is a very limited sample, if any, of discourse concerning *multiculturalism* and the other mainstream political parties. I hypothesis that in the case of both the Conservative Party and the Labour

Party, the backlash to multiculturalism at turn of the 21st century pushed both parties to avoid using the term as to not lose key voters. Nonetheless, in the case of the Liberal Democrats, it was very surprising that lack of discourse on multiculturalism. Indeed, in 2011 Nick Clegg outlined his fervent support for multiculturalism through the approach of “muscular liberalism”, stating: “*openness and confidence go hand in hand: remaining open to different cultures and attitudes is easier for people, communities and nations that are confident of their own position*” (Clegg, 2011). The then-Deputy Prime Minister’s support for multiculturalism was in direct opposition to David Cameron (See Literature Review: Cameron’s *One Nation* Conservatism). Nonetheless, the support for the doctrine appears to have disappeared, as there was no discourse supporting multiculturalism either prior or during the Brexit campaign.

Thusly, I have selected three political discourses regarding UKIP’s framing of multiculturalism. The first concerns an interview held between the digital radio platform LBC (Leading Britain’s Conversation) and Nigel Farage. The second piece of political discourse is the first official campaign broadcast UKIP made during the Brexit Campaign. Thirdly, and finally, the last piece of political discourse concerns the framing of multiculturalism through the lens of Female Genital Mutilation in the United Kingdom.

Body

UKIP, Farage, and Multiculturalism

The United Kingdom Independence Party is a right-wing, Eurosceptic, and populist political in the United Kingdom. Originating from the Anti-Federalist League, the party enjoyed relatively little success until the appointment of Nigel Farage in 2006. Adopting a wider policy platform, coupled with their focus on rising immigration in the country, UKIP saw notable breakthroughs in the 2013 local elections, where the party won over 140 and averaged 22% of the popular vote (BBC, 2013), the 2014 European Parliament election in the United Kingdom, in which UKIP overtook the Conservatives to become the first party other than Labour and Conservatives to win the popular vote at a British election by winning 24 seats and roughly 26% of the popular vote (BBC, 2014), and the 2015 general election where, though Nigel Farage’s party only won one seat in Parliament, UKIP was overall the third most voted party (UK elections, 2015). Furthermore, the Conservative leader David Cameron had promised in his election manifesto that there would be a referendum on Great Britain’s membership in the European Union, to

gain lost votes from UKIP (Goodwin & Milazzo, 2015). Thusly, UKIP began campaigning with *Leave.EU*, differentiated from the Conservative-led *Vote Leave* (Usherwood, 2016). By campaigning under a different group, Usherwood argues that Nigel Farage gained regular press coverage, in addition to being capable of emphasising the negative impact of immigration in local communities (Usherwood, 2016). After the 23rd of June 2016, when it was made clear that the British electorate had voted to withdraw from the European Union, and with the UKIP's *raison d'être* accomplished, Nigel Farage resigned as party leader, with the loss of its MEPs resulting in the political party losing a large portion of its funding (Usherwood, 2016).

UKIP's role in mobilising the electorate to vote Leave has been described by various scholars as "influential" (Hughes, 2019; Tournier-Sol, 2020). Hughes underlines UKIP's role in mobilising traditional non-voters, with the figure accounting for around 2.8 million people (Singh, 2016), who "*overwhelmingly voted to leave the EU*" (Hughes, 2019: 249). Hughes argues that their ability to mobilise people both to campaign and to vote stemmed from their success in the 2015 general election (Hughes, 2019). Tournier-Sol furthers this point by arguing that UKIP was pivotal in politicising the issue of membership in the European Union, originating from the Anti-Federalist League's opposition to the Maastricht treaty, in addition to being one of the major agents in the triumph of the *Leave* vote (Tournier-Sol, 2020). The author also states that UKIP was successful in bringing to the national political realm the concept of European integration, thus contributing to the disruption of the European project (Tournier-Sol, 2020).

As mentioned previously, UKIP campaign mostly revolved around the negative effects of immigration in British communities. The combination of "othering" populism (Hughes, 2019), the use of fear-mongering tactics (Obschonka et al., 2018), and the framing of Brexit as "us" versus "the establishment" (Norris & Inglehart, 2019) saw the *Leave* campaign triumph in the June 2016 referendum. However, in the following section I argue that UKIP, and specifically Nigel Farage, framed multiculturalism as a "failed policy" to galvanise support for the campaign.

LBC, Farage, and “*London Not Feeling Like Britain*”

On the 2nd of October 2015, Nigel Farage appeared on the digital radio platform LBC (Leading Britain’s Conversation). Asked about the state of multiculturalism in the United Kingdom, the then-leader of UKIP said: “*If we talk about multiculturalism as meaning that we have people coming to Britain from other parts of the world that generally make the place look a bit brighter and jollier and give us restaurants far better than the food we could have managed on our own [...] then fine. But if multiculturalism means that you see whole sections of your towns and cities change culturally beyond all recognition, where in places English is not the first language of choice, you begin to ask yourself what has happened to the identity of our country?*” (LBC, 2015). Farage then continues by making mention of John Cleese, a famous English actor and liberal democrat, by saying: “*He [John Cleese] fails to see London anymore as being an English city*” (LBC, 2015). When asked by the interviewer if he believed that London does not resemble an English city, Farage answered by saying: “*In parts of London I do, yes, and that’s why the intelligent thing is to have an immigration policy where you have proper restrictions on the numbers that come. If you have an uncontrolled flow, the hopes of people assimilating, becoming part of society, are virtually impossible* (LBC, 2015).

Several themes relating to multiculturalism appear in Farage’s comments. For starters, the definition of multiculturalism as citizens of different parts of the world opening “restaurants”, or “making the place a bit brighter or jollier”, is simplistic and warps the reality of British multiculturalism. By equating multiculturalism to food, music, and clothing (or whatever makes Britain a brighter and jollier place), Farage oversimplifies the complexities of multiculturalism, thus defining multiculturalism as anything and everything that is not considered as British food, music, and clothing. Furthermore, I argue that by using the example of “restaurants”, Farage analyses multiculturalism through its utility and purpose. Therefore, “*people coming over to Britain [...] to give us restaurants*” solely focuses on how “they” can give “us” things “we” do not have. The binary conceptualisation of multiculturalism through its’ focus on “them” giving “us” things is a common theme of UKIP’s ideology.

Moreover, the “othering” that Hughes argues is one of the main aspects of UKIP’s image is clearly portrayed in Farage’s comments (Hughes, 2019). Again, the line “*people coming over to Britain [...] to give us restaurants*” shows how Farage frames immigration, and multiculturalism, as “us” and “them”. The use of “us”, though it is unclear who constitutes “us”, is a clear example of Farage framing multiculturalism through a binary conceptualisation.

Thusly, it seems that all restaurants that do not serve British food are not British, therefore belonging to the category of “them”. Farage oversimplification of the multicultural reality of Britain, and his defining of Britishness through the “othering” of different cultures, is an example of how discourse creates identity by positioning others based on a presumption of centrality and fixity of the self (Chilton, 2004). Thusly, Farage denies the possibility of a British identity through its multicultural character, instead choosing to define British identity purely through historical British culture, whiteness, and heritage, and the binary conceptualisation of “us” and “them”.

Farage’s definition of British identity is continued by him stating “*But if multiculturalism means that you see whole sections of your towns and cities change culturally beyond all recognition, where in places English is not the first language of choice, you begin to ask yourself what has happened to the identity of our country?*”. Again, the “othering” through “your towns and cities” suggests that the citizens of these places, who have changed the place “culturally beyond all recognition”, are not British. Furthermore, his definition of multiculturalism as the “cultural change beyond all recognition, where English is not the first language of choice” once again shows his disregard to the complex nature of multiculturalism. Farage’s concern that English is “not the first language of choice” shows his disdain for multiculturalism and the impact migration has had on the country. By characterising Britishness as the use of English as the first language of choice again shows the binary lens of defining identity. Indeed, even disregarding Welsh and Gaelic speakers who under Farage’s definition would not be British, the emphasis of language as the basis of identity creates another binary distinction between those whose first language is English, and thus “British”, and those whose first language is not English, and therefore “not British”.

Furthermore, when questioned if London is still an English city, Nigel Farage responded by saying that he felt that some parts did not resemble it. I argue that the importance of this statement is the complete disregard for the historical multicultural nature of London. Indeed, even before the *Windrush* generation, and even before the Victorian era, Sandhu argues that London was already a polyethnic metropolis, in addition to lamenting that: “*All too often black people and Asians are used in contemporary discourse as metaphors for newness*” (Sandhu, 2003: 50). Sandhu perfectly portrays the multiculturalist nature of London in saying: “*London was the making of them [the immigrants], just as they were the making of London*” (Sandhu, 2003: 56). Thusly, though it is true that immigration has increased to new heights over the last 25 years, with a net immigration of approximately 100,000 each year (UK Migration, 2021),

Farage's objection is solely focused on its cultural ramifications. Indeed, the emphasis on the need to "assimilate" over integrate, for immigrants to become "part of society", is a clear example of his rejection of multiculturalism and its policies. The need to "assimilate" shows Farage's deep distrust in the cultures and attitudes of said immigrants, who if are not assimilated pose a threat to British values and norms.

The opposition to multiculturalism is continued by Farage in saying: "*I was met with an avalanche of abuse from those who support multiculturalism, who tend to live in 3-million-pound houses in Notting Hill and think mass immigration is good because it gives them cheaper nannies*" (LBC, 2015). Two important themes arise from this comment. Firstly, Farage continues the use of "othering", however in this instance it is used to differentiate the "people" from the "elite", or in his words, those who "tend to live in 3-million-pound houses". Secondly, the former leader of UKIP continues his viewing of multiculturalism in terms of its utility by saying "[They] think mass immigration is good because it gives them cheaper nannies".

In the final part of the interview, the reporter asks Nigel Farage "*why does it matter if they [Southall, Tower Hamlets, and Tottenham] have gone very-Asian, or very-Caribbean?*" (LBC, 2015). Farage answers by saying that: "*Because what happens is that if you get too big a change in an area you get resentment. You get resentment from the population that were there to begin with, and sometimes you sort of get the reinforcement of a whole area as being culturally completely different to its neighbour. Now, some may say that's fine. I actually think that I'd rather live in a society where regardless of race or class, people mix together and lived in a big community*" (LBC, 2015).

The use of Southall, Tower Hamlets, and Tottenham is notable. Starting with Southall, the most recent census from 2011 shows that between the wards of Southall Broadway and Southall Green there was a population of 28,018, of which the large majority (76.1%) were classified as Asian British, in addition to having the lowest population of White British residents in the whole of the United Kingdom (UK Census Data, 2011). Furthermore, the borough of Tower Hamlets housed a large portion of Asian British inhabitants (41%), just shy of the total of the White British population (45%) (Tower Hamlets, 2013). Finally, the town of Tottenham is also inhabited by different ethnic populations, with White Other comprising 27.7%, White British 22%, Black British 26.7%, and Asian 10.7% (UK Polling Report, 2015).

Immigration to these three areas is strongly tied to the end of the Second World War and the subsequent approval of the British National Act of 1948. Though immigration to Southall

started during the 1920s and 1930s, when an influx of Welsh immigrants migrated to the borough to escape the economic hardship characteristic of that time (McKibbin & Mc Hissun, 1998), the influx of migration from South Asia began in the 1950s and continues to this day. Furthermore, the borough of Tower Hamlets saw even earlier immigration due to the availability of cheap labour, exemplified by the influx of Eastern European Jews towards the end of the 19th century. Though a population declined after its destruction during WWII, the establishment of the London Docklands Development Corporation saw an increase of immigration from South Asia during the 1970s (Hammett, 2003). Finally, the town of Tottenham saw an influx from the Caribbean Commonwealth through the mid-20th century, and more recently has seen a flow of migration from Africa, South Asia, and Eastern Europe.

Farage's claim that the settlement of non-British communities in these parts of London has brought resentment is accurate. During the 1970s and 1980s, racial tensions grew between the inhabitants, local youths, and the police, exemplified by the Broadwater Farm riot in Tottenham, in which a police officer was "hacked to death" (The Police Foundation, 1986), the murder of Sikh teenager Gurdip Singh Chaggar in 1976 (Kettle & Hodges, 1982), and the death of Blair Peach and the inducing into a coma of Clarence Baker during a protest turned riot against the National Front (Marshall, 1991). Nonetheless, I argue that Farage emphasises the presence of ethnic communities as the main reason for the violence, instead of the radical youths belonging to far-right wing parties who in many cases were the main instigators (Holmes, 1975). Thusly, Farage looks to lay the blame for the resentment on the multiculturalist policies of London, again simplifying the complexity of race riots. Finally, Farage's desire to "live together in a big community" stresses the need for immigrants to assimilate British values and norms, rather than integrating and maintaining each person's individual cultural heritage.

Overall, I argue that several themes appear in Farage's discourse on multiculturalism. Firstly, the oversimplification of multiculturalism allows Farage to address the concept through a binary lens of "us" versus "them", in which ethnic minorities and their culture are considered as different to what he considers as "British". Secondly, his viewing of multiculturalism and its elements through terms of utility and purpose ("they" give "us" things) obscures its complexities. Thirdly, the emphasis on "othering" the presence of different cultures and ethnicities in relation to Britishness shows how Farage believes that their existence is incompatible with the country's identity, thus focusing on a need to "assimilate" over integrate. Fourthly, Farage accentuates the incompatibility of multiculturalism with "British" values and norms, arguing that its policies have meant many different ethnicities do not take part in

contemporary society. Lastly, Nigel Farage continues the populist discourse of “the people” versus “the elite” by arguing that latter support policies of multiculturalism and mass immigration, as they are removed from the reality of their effects and consequences on day-to-day life.

The Turkish Question: How UKIP framed Turkish ascension to the EU

On the 16th of June 2016, just one week before the British electorate were to cast the votes in favour or against the United Kingdom’s withdrawal from the European Union, Michael Gove, Boris Johnson and Gisela Stuart, then-members of parliament campaigning for *Leave* penned a letter to the Prime Minister David Cameron and his Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond on “*Getting the facts clear on Turkey*” (Vote Leave, 2016). The three MPs argued that “*it is essential that voters are fully informed about Turkish accession to the EU* (Vote Leave, 2016), in addition to stating that though the *Remain* campaign maintained that there was no prospect of Turkey joining the EU, this was in “*conflict with official Government policy and that of the European Union* (Vote Leave, 2016). The letter concluded with “*if the Government cannot give this guarantee, the public will draw the reasonable conclusion that the only way to avoid having common borders with Turkey is to Vote Leave and take back control on 23 June*” (Vote Leave, 2016). The general sentiment of the letter was replicated by former leader of the Conservative Party and campaigner for *Leave* Ian Duncan Smith, who wrote in an article for the Daily Mail “*David Cameron has repeatedly claimed that Turkey is not going to join the EU, despite it being Government policy. Now the Turkish government has confirmed that he is the ‘chief supporter’ of their bid to join the EU ... I’m afraid there is no conclusion you can draw from this except that David Cameron is colluding with the EU and lying to the British people. Families are suffering the consequences of uncontrolled migration*” (Vote Leave, 2016).

As mentioned in the introduction to this paper, there were a myriad of reasons for the triumph of the *Leave* campaign, but the unrealistic idea that Turkey’s ascension to the European Union was imminent was surprisingly influential in the result (Ker-Lindsay, 2018). Nonetheless, Ker-Lindsay argues that the emphasis on Turkey should not be surprising, as it played on various key themes of the *Leave* campaign: immigration, anti-Islamisation, and security threats (Ker-Lindsay, 2018). The author continues by stating that though Turkey has been a nominal

candidate to join the European Union since its application on the 14th of April 1987, there were no European leaders that viewed their ascension as a realistic proposition, in addition to the fact that Turkish desire to enter the EU has also declined following the authoritarian turn of President Erdogan (Ker-Lindsay, 2018). Furthermore, the idea the British government was a staunch supporter of Turkish membership is also complicated by the waning of British policy regarding favouring the enlargement of the supranational organisation (Ker-Lindsay, 2018).

Therefore, though *a priori* the possibility of Turkish ascension to the EU does not appear as a factor that would imminently influence the multiculturalist debate in the United Kingdom, I argue that the *Leave* campaign's framing of the issue shows how their opposition was mostly cultural in nature. Thus, cultural elements such as the predominance of Islam and the depicting of the country as "Eastern" emphasises their rejection to the multiculturalist policies espoused by the early years of New Labour and the European Union, instead grounding British identity through Christianity, whiteness, and the othering of *non-Europeanness*.

UKIP and Turkey: The "othering" of Islam and the "East"

As mentioned previously, though the official campaign began on the 13th of April 2016 with the adjudication of *Vote Leave* and *Britain Stronger in Europe* as the official "Leave" and "Remain" campaigns respectively, unofficial campaigning began months before that. Nonetheless, UKIP chose not to affiliate itself with the official *Leave* campaign, instead choosing to head the project *Leave.EU* (Usherwood, 2016). On the 2nd of February 2016, with the BBC allocating time for political party broadcasts as it has done throughout its history, the UKIP was given permission to broadcast (Ker-Lindsay, 2018). What followed was a 3 and-a-half video (UKIP, 2016) warning of the consequences of Turkish membership to the EU, a broadcast that was staunchly criticised by the Liberal Democrats (Ker-Lindsay, 2018: 7).

The video begins with the title "The risks of staying in the EU: No 1 – Turkey joins in 2020?", followed by 15 seconds of various headlines stating David Cameron's desire for Turkey to become a member of the European Union. At min 0:32 the reporter indicated that she is at the Bosphorus, the natural strait that separates "East from West". I argue that the choice of wording of "East and West" shows UKIP's intent to classify Turkey as non-European due to its cultural characteristics, continuing the troubling binary that provides a limited understanding of the

culturally aspects of the regions (Sewpaul, 2016). The labelling of Turkey as non-European is underlined at min 0:35, in which a map of Turkey is shown, indicating that “only” 3% of the country is in Europe, whilst 97% is in Asia. Again, the simplicity of using, in this case, geography to establish if a country is European or not is relying on a binary framework that overlooks the regional complexities. Thusly, the discourse exhibits the binary conceptualisation of identity through, in this case, space. Furthermore, this designation of Turkey as non-European solely on its geography is fraught with inconsistency, as Cyprus is also to the East of the Bosphorus and has been a member in the European Union since 2004.

At min 0:42 the reporter continues by stating that if Turkey were to join the European Union, it would extend the borders of “what would be now Europe” to Syria, Iraq, and Iran. I argue that framing the enlargement of the European Union towards these countries played on emotion, especially fear, to mobilise the electorate, with populist campaigns more probable to evoke anxiety and threats during the campaigns (Obschonka et al., 2018). Furthermore, at min 1:40 the spokeswoman stats that the average salary in the United Kingdom is more than five times than in Turkey (£2200 per month compared to £429), with which she follows up by saying that up to 15 million Turkish immigrants could move into Europe in the next 10 years. The emphasis on the difference of salary should also be considered as an attempt to mobilise the electorate through emotion-evoking, as it paints the picture that Europe will be flooded with Turkish immigration looking for higher wages. Moreover, the reporter points out Turkey’s situation regarding press freedom, where it ranks 149th out of 180 countries. Though Turkish press freedom is a dire situation, by focusing on this problem, UKIP looks to accentuate the differences between the United Kingdom and Turkey. Furthermore, the discourse presents a clear deixis and delimitation between “them” as repressive and “us” as good, open, and tolerant society. This binary conceptualisation is compounded by the reporter saying: *“this is why I felt more comfortable filming this back here in the UK”*. This drive to emphasis the cultural differences is furthered at min 2:10, when the reporter cites a UN report from 2011 that suggested that women in the country were 10 times more likely to suffer physical abuse than in Europe, suggesting that gender violence would spread in Europe if Turkey was admitted to the European Union.

Nonetheless, the most notable part of the video occurs at on min 2:28. Overlooking the Hagia Sofia in Istanbul, the spokeswoman for UKIP states that in 1900, 1 in 5 of the Turkish population was Christian, in stark contrast to today in which “just” 1 in over 500 follow Christianity openly. This is followed by highlighting the changes in education policy during the

Erdogan Presidency years, in which “a great number” of state schools have become Islamic Imam schools, were those “*who can’t afford to pay for their schooling forced to choose a religious education*” (UKIP, 2016). This fact is furthered by the reporter in saying that “*when the ruling party took over 63000 students were registered in Imam schools. Now this number is at over one million*” (UKIP, 2016). The video ends with the reporter stating that “*just days after filming outside the Hagia Sophia, a suicide attacker detonated a bomb in the same location, killing ten tourists. The assailant has been identified as an Islamic State affiliate, who had come into the country from Syria*” (UKIP, 2016). In essence, the main theme of the political party broadcast is the categorisation of Turkey as “non-European”, which is achieved by defining its otherness through both its geographical location and its difference in religion. Nonetheless, I argue that the video also plays a different role: as an overt opposition to multiculturalism.

The emphasis on the decline of the Christianity in the country, and its subsequent Islamisation, is intended to portray Turkey as incompatible to Europe, and thus the United Kingdom. By accentuating the difference in religion, UKIP defines both *Europeanness* and *Britishness* through its othering of the societies which are predominantly Islam. This idea is furthered by the reference to the education policy under Turkish President Erdogan, which has seen an increased role of Islam in school and society (Kaya, 2015). Moreover, the increased *Islamisation* is then coupled with the report of the terrorist incident in the *Hagia Sophia*, which should be considered as an unobvious attempt to connect the increased *Islamisation* of society with the radicalisation of the religion through terrorist attacks in the region and abroad. Thus, not only does UKIP use the broadcast to define Islam and Turkey as non-European, but the political party also uses the terrorist attack to equate *Islamisation* with radicalisation. This othering is compounded by the last image of the video at min 3:29, which shows that the three main political parties support Turkey’s ascension to the European Union, whilst both UKIP and the “*British People*” do not support it. This further emphasises that Turkey seemingly does not belong in Europe, due to its geographical location and, more importantly, it is a predominantly Islam country. In this case, the “othering” is achieved through the mark of religion, pitting the “good”, “tolerant”, and “Christian” Europe against the “repressive”, “radical”, and “Islam” Turkey.

The opposition to multiculturalism is therefore obvious. By “othering” Turkey from Europe due to the dominance of Islam in the country, UKIP is essentially stating that Islam is not a part of Europe, and thus Europe. Furthermore, far-right wing parties such as UKIP have traditionally campaigned against multicultural Britain, with Grillo arguing that multiculturalism has been

“under pressure in the political spectrum [...], in a climate dominated by the events of 2001 and much tension around the Islamic presence” (Grillo, 2010: 63). Thus, the video, apart from directly showcasing the “dangers” of Islamisation and UKIP’s disdain for multiculturalist policies that historically favoured integration over assimilation, should also be considered as a strategy to appeal to a more traditional and typically older electorate. As noted by Norris and Inglehart, this electorate overwhelmingly voted in favour of Brexit (Norris & Inglehart, 2016). Therefore, by playing on the fear that an overwhelmingly Islam country such as Turkey was on the cusp of joining the European Union played on their fear of increased Islamisation, and thus radicalisation, in Europe and by conjunction, the United Kingdom. The multicultural nature of the European Union was used by UKIP to evoke fear into an older and more traditional electorate who had seen old customs and norms replaced by more progressive values (Norris & Inglehart, 2016). Overall, through its framing of Turkey as non-European through its religion, and the willingness to exaggerate the imminent accession of the country to the European Union, the UKIP political party broadcast intended to show its opposition to the multiculturalist nature of contemporary Europe, in addition to appealing to a more traditional electorate, who had seen an increase in both progressive values and the increase in different ethnic and cultural communities of which they did not belong. Thusly, UKIP defined Europeanness and Britishness through its non-Islam and non- “East” nature, in direct opposition to the multiculturalist nature of contemporary Europe and Great Britain.

UKIP, Female Genital Mutilation and Multiculturalism

Tensions of multiculturalist policy and discourse surrounding FGM

As I have outlined previously, the New Labour government’s initial steps surrounding multiculturalism emphasised the need to integrate the diverse ethnic and cultural communities into mainstream British society. Thusly, the policies of multiculturalism under Tony Blair were considered as popular and necessary, as they looked to directly address the political and cultural concerns of ethnic minority groups (Kalev, 2004). Nonetheless, tensions arose from exactly how far these policies would go in accommodating the diverse cultural traditions of ethnic minorities.

Kalev exemplifies the debate through the opposing views of two scholars on multiculturalism: Will Kymlicka and Chandra Kukathas. Kymlicka argues that there should be a framework that grants “group rights”, however with limitations (Kymlicka, 1995). These “limitations” concern how “group rights” must not entail the suppression of the individuals’ rights (Kymlicka, 1995). In what Kalev perceives as the “liberalisation” of all the cultural groups, Kymlicka argues that FGM should be prohibited as it violates the freedom of the individual, specifically when carried out on minors (Kalev, 2014).

Nonetheless, Kukathas approaches the issue from a different angle. If, as Kymlicka would suggest, we live in a liberal society which values the freedom of the individuals as the cornerstone of contemporary society, then the individual should *a priori* be able to live their life as they deem fit, including participating in the cultural communities of their choice (Kukathas, 1995). Thusly, if participation in these cultural communities is voluntary and not born from coercion, then cultural associations should be allowed to pursue the cultural traditions of their choosing, that is if they are not directly enforced on society (Kukathas, 1995). Kalev suggests that the difference in approach stems from their difference in defining of “the individual”, with Kymlicka focusing on individual right as not being repressed by others, whilst Kukathas sees individual right as their right to choose (Kalev, 2004).

On this aspect of FGM in British contemporary society, Kalev ascertains that the British policy rejected both Kymlicka’s and Kukathas’ approaches, the first because it did not respect sufficiently the nature of a cultural community, and the second as they perceived it lacked the protection of possible violation of their freedoms, which would contradict the British tradition of respect for tolerance, democracy, and the rule of law (Kalev, 2004). Nonetheless, the tension surrounding the policies of multiculturalism would shift British policy toward emphasising shared British values and norms over cultural diversity, specifically regarding FGM in society.

FGM in the United Kingdom

Female Genital Mutilation in the United Kingdom is typically a cultural practice carried out mostly in ethnic and migrant communities, especially from countries such as Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Nigeria, and Eritrea, but also non-African countries such as Yemen, Afghanistan, and Kurdish, Indonesian, and Pakistani groups (Momoh, 2005). The most recent estimate, done in 2015, suggests that there are 137000 women and girls that have

undergone FGM rituals (Macfarlene and Dorkenoo, 2015). Furthermore, the Health and Social Care Information Centre began recording data on FGM practices since September 2014, with the most recent estimates carried out between January 2021 and March 2021 suggesting that 1550 women and girls had undergone FGM procedures, including 690 who were newly recorded (NHS Digital, 2021).

UK legislation targeting FGM was first enacted with the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act of 1985. However, the law was modified after evidence suggested that up to 7000 girls were at risk of being subjected to it abroad. Thusly, Parliament passed the Female Genital Mutilation Act of 2003, which extended the ban on FGM to criminalise those who took girls abroad to undergo these procedures with a prison sentence of between 5 years and 14 years. The legislation was furthered by the Serious Crime Act of 2015, which added the offense of failing to protect a child in one's care from FGM, the introduction of anonymity for victims and FGM prevention orders.

Nonetheless, one of the main issues of FGM has been the little success in successful prosecution. In fact, up until 2019 there had been no FGM convictions in the United Kingdom. The combination of young age and vulnerability of most FGM victims, the fact that the cutters themselves tend to be family, and that most FGM rituals tend to be carried out in countries where FGM is not considered a legal offense, and thus outside the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom, hampered the possibility of convicting offenders (NIHRC, 2016: 22).

The framing of multiculturalism through the lens of FGM

On the 10th of February of 2015, roughly 10 months after UKIP won the 2014 European Parliament election in the United Kingdom, then-MEP Louise Bours of UKIP (which in the European Parliament formed part of the wider Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy group) intervened in the debate: Zero tolerance for female genital mutilation, during the parliamentary session in Strasbourg (UKIP, 2015). On the issue of FGM in the European Union, Bours stated: *There are tens of thousands of cases of FGM in the UK and not one person has been brought to justice. It's the failed policy of multiculturalism which has given rise to this abomination across the UK. In the UK elected officials and representatives have turned a blind eye to this practice in order not to offend minority communities and avoid being labelled as racist. Lack of integration within this communities and the political class too afraid to speak*

out are allowing these practices to continue. It is these people who have let down thousands of young girls and women butchered in the name of a backward cultural custom. This evil practice must end. Politicians and the justice system must have the courage to act, protecting children has to take priority over zealous and outdated political correctness.

The speech starts with MEP Bours stressing the number of young women and girls suffering from FGM but highlighting how “not one person has been brought to justice”. Through the analytical framework of Chilton, I argue that this excerpt is an example of political discourse functioning to negotiate representations; in this case, the shared presumption that British legislation has failed to tackle the problem of FMG. Moreover, the use of “abomination” is used to trigger a certain emotion in the listener, in this case “disgust” or “anger”. The evoking of these emotions is coupled by framing the multiculturalist policies as the culprit of this “abomination”. This is followed by the use deixis to anchor the speaker in the “position” of what is right and good, that is, in direct opposition of the multiculturalist policies that have allowed such an “abomination” has occurred. Thusly, the speaker anchors herself at the intersection of what is “right”, which is the opposite of what “UK elected officials and representatives have done by turning a blind eye”. She positions herself through an “othering” of the minority communities who are the perpetrators of this “abomination”. Furthermore, I argue that her speech again is used to negotiate representations. In this case, the line “[the] *lack of integration within these communities [...] are allowing for these practices to continue*”, can be analysed as the creation of a shared representation. The ambiguous use of “minority communities” as the culprits for the practising of FGM should be considered as imbedding the idea that these communities live apart from British society, thus contributing to the discourse that the policies of multiculturalism have resulted in a lack of integration.

In the second half of the intervention, I argue that the speech takes on an even more emotion-evoking turn. MEP Bours use of the words “butchered”, “backward” and “evil”, are designed to trigger emotions of anger and disgust in the listener. Thusly, as I argued in the first half of the speech, the speaker anchors herself at the intersection of good, whilst “these people” (referring to both minority communities and the political class) are in direct opposition to her as the forces of “evil”. Furthermore, the choice of wording, for example “butchered”, plays a double role in both conceptualising the identity of “good” versus “evil”, in addition to triggering an emotional response in the listener. Interestingly, the call for action (“*This evil practice must end. Politicians and the justice system must have the courage to act, protecting children has to take priority over zealous and outdated political correctness*”) makes no mention of the need

for further integration of these minority communities, instead putting the onus on the political and justice system to “do what is right”. I hypothesise that this is an effort to again distance herself from the “abominations” committed by minority communities.

As for the main themes that appear in her speech, I highlight two. Firstly, the framing of multiculturalism as both a failure and morally inept. The attribution of failure to multiculturalism is abundantly obvious when the MEP says: *“It’s the failed policy of multiculturalism which has given rise to this abomination across the UK”*. Nonetheless, I argue her framing of multiculturalism does not end at describing it as a failure, instead going on to identify multiculturalism as morally corrupt. The line *“It is these people who have let down thousands of young girls butchered in the name of a backward cultural custom”*, apart from evoking the thought of young women and girls being cut “like animals” (“butchered”), stresses that it is the political class, the elected officials in the United Kingdom, that have supported the multiculturalism that allows this “abomination”. Thusly, I argue that she positions multiculturalism as a force of evil that supports “this evil practice”, whilst anchoring herself and UKIP as the force of good who pressure the political and the justice system to “have the courage to act”, to protect the “children”.

On the other hand, the second theme that I highlight in the speech is the “othering”, that is, the anchoring of the political discourse through multi-dimensional deixis. This is achieved by the labelling of the political class, or “establishment”, as complicit with the “abomination” caused by the doctrine of multiculturalism to “not offend minority communities and avoid being labelled a racist”. The use of the word “racist” alludes to the fact that anyone who disagrees with multiculturalism is considered as discriminatory to these minority communities, thus creating a binary conceptualisation of those who favour multiculturalism against those who do not. On the other hand, I argue that this “othering” also applies to the “minority communities”, once again creating a binary conceptualisation of the United Kingdom through portraying “them” (the minority communities) who continue the practices of FGM against “us” (the rest of Britain) who do not approve of this “backward cultural custom”. As Chilton states: *“Identity unfolds in discourse by positioning others on the axes of space, time and rightness”* (Chilton, 2004: 200). Thusly, Louise Bours defines the identity of the Britain through its rejection of the multicultural policies supported by the political class and minority communities, presuming herself and UKIP as “right” and “good”. Overall, both the framing of multiculturalism as a “failure” and morally wrong, and the “othering” of both the political establishment and minority

communities, are the main themes identifiable in this discourse, which have incidentally been the common themes regarding UKIP's framing of multiculturalism.

Conclusions

Over the course of this research paper, I have mapped out how UKIP framed multiculturalism before and during the Brexit referendum campaign. Using a political discourse analysis, I argued that UKIP rejected multiculturalism and defined *Britishness* in opposition to it. By emphasising the perceived “lack of integration” of ethnic and cultural minorities communities, UKIP essentially conceptualised British identity through a binary lens which overlooked the complex nature of multicultural Britain.

UKIP framed multiculturalism as a failed policy that had resulted in ethnic minorities not integrating in mainstream society. Thusly, UKIP defined Britishness through nativist and ethnonationalist elements such as race, religion, and culture. Though immigration has been a part of British society for centuries, UKIP persisted with the “othering” of minority communities who had not assimilated British values and tradition, and thus could not be considered as “British”. Furthermore, the “othering” of Turkey as an Islamic and “East” country showcased the anti-Islamist nature of the populist party. For UKIP, multiculturalism was nothing more than a failed policy that has resulted in the lack of integration of various ethnic and cultural communities, weakening the sense of British identity. Moreover, the “othering” of those who supported multiculturalist policies resulted in UKIP portraying the Brexit referendum as a contest between “the establishment” who supported multiculturalism and “the people” who saw Britain's identity weakened after years of multiculturalist policy. Thus, UKIP envisioned the referendum as a “once in a lifetime” opportunity to leave the multiculturalist policies of the European Union. Their rhetoric harkened back to a time where the society was predominantly white, Anglo-Saxon, and Christian, simplifying Brexit as a clash between integration and identity. Furthermore, the framing of multiculturalism as complicit with the presence of FGM in the United Kingdom showed that for UKIP multiculturalism was a dangerous ideology intent on weakening the collective identity of the British people, and that what was needed was the assimilation of these ethnic and cultural communities to prevent further debilitating of Britain's identity, and a new immigration policy to stem the flow of migrants that would never integrate into mainstream society.

Arguably, the framing of multiculturalism in this manner mobilised the electorate to vote in favour. As older generations saw their norms and values fall “out of place” in favour of more progressive ones, a cultural backlash occurred, with UKIP at the helm, as the older electorate grew disillusioned and resentful with the globalist policies and mass immigration which followed. Thus, multiculturalism was seen as the reason for radicalisation, increasing Islamisation, and non-integration of ethnic and cultural minorities, and that the only way to restore British identity was to leave the European Union. Indeed, a backlash to multiculturalism was already occurring before UKIP joined the bandwagon. The populist party took advantage of the growing resentment and anger, often directed at those who are not white, not Christian, and not British-born. UKIP campaigned for tougher immigration control and assimilation over integration, and they won. Indeed, if multiculturalism as an ideology was not dead before the Brexit campaign, it certainly was afterwards. No mention of it was made from *Britain Stronger in Europe*, instead being replaced by vague concepts like “cultural diversity”, “cultural pluralism”, or “interculturalism”. The triumph of the *Leave* campaign signalled Britain’s disdain for multiculturalist policies.

The future of multiculturalism in Britain is on very thin ice. The rise of hate crimes towards ethnic minorities soared during and in the immediate aftermath of the Brexit campaign (Mirror, 2016), reminding us that the racial tensions and violence of the 1960s and 1970s is not that long ago. Indeed, the post-Brexit government of Boris Johnson seems to be sliding towards a more “nationalistic, populist, reactionary, and even xenophobic” aspect (TheGuardian, 2021). However, this is still also the once tolerant, open-minded, mayor of London who portrayed himself as “pro-immigrant” (Daily Telegraph, 2013) and proud of the capital’s long history of diversity (The Conversation, 2019). Only time will tell of multiculturalism will evolve in the United Kingdom. However, what is clear is that ethnic and cultural minorities will also be part of the British fabric, in or out of the European Union. What is needed is a discussion on the shortcomings of multiculturalism vis-à-vis integration, and not the entrenching of nativism and ethnonationalism in the public discourse.

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